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World Review

Incorporating Review of Reviews

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On Cover: Detail of Last Supper by El Aleijadinho in the church of 'Bom Jesus' at Congonhas, Brazil—Judas Iscariot and an unidentified apostle.

1 2 ★

THE COLD SPRING

(Whanne that Aprille with his shoures sote . . .)

EWART MILNE

She dances into my room and laughs at poetry
snatches my morning canto
reads mockingly aloud
flat!
I squirm in shame, take up the gambit, make a grab . . .
here we go round the
table desk chair
rush catch wrestle
Isn't it what she wants? Teasings and wrestlings,
all the preliminaries,
trimmings, mock matches, semi-bouts, small excesses!

Here her slender years deny, but something
will not be denied
this we know
no outlet drives it in
no fusion no consummation means no rest
no respite even
But yet her meaning doesn't lie in this—
and so, no barricades!
I will not lock my room, lock her out,
then call and say 'I'm busy, go away!'

* * *

To have a choice
but no choice
To have a chance
and not to take it
Not to whisper wild those nothings
not to teach her words
she only knows as words
Is to belong neither to the devil's party nor yet to sup with angels . . .
To this pass have we come!

Consider she can see in me only
the male
Consider she expects from me only
the male appreciation
Consider she likes to dance before me naked
exposing
(Dance, Shulamite, before the Lord!)
her belly of a child!
Granted but who teaches her this?
Who teaches her to defend herself by exhibition,
And, by apparent non-defence of all,
Fits her to maintain her future condition
intact and inviolate
empress imperial!
To this pass have we come.

The Cold Spring

There is a child dancing in my room laughing at poetry mocking
And the bombs are falling
the new bombs are falling
or the old bombs are falling
erupting soundlessly erupting
And shall I laugh and say
There are no new bombs
there are only old bombs
'Look, darling, look at the pretty starshells
look at the snow melting!'
But what should she know of a dying world annihilating itself?

There is a child laughing at poetry
at my poetry at all poetry
child or girl or woman triumphant
Dancing in my room and smiling
Boom! Boom!
Nearer that one, the room rocking, soundlessly rocking.
Boom! Boom!

Yes, dusty answers, I see you now!
I hear your prayer asking
death
death by fire death by burning
death down all the stations of the breath
death on the manchild's death
Boom! Boom! Boom!

And again I think
she will not be the same
come Friday
or in a year or more
a year or four
it's now or never
O time O place is this my loved one not for me
but for the unknown, the oncoming lover?
Boom! Boom! Boom!

Boom, then, and burst, fritter and fade,
but yet I'll shelter her
grow wings grow pinions
Rise my swan my royal swan, beat wings over Leda,
cover and shelter!
What matter for that shudder in the loins—
there'll be no further Troys
no, nor Hectors, Agamemnons, engendered here
if you but hold until the flood
the jubilant flood renews
bringing to the oblivious oblivion
bringing life to life
Boom! Boom! Boom!

Then as I pinch myself awake
nothing at all
she gone and my room the same
looking out at the poplar tree
leafing slowly this cold spring
leafing in a silence so stately it seems elected.

THE PARTNERS

DEREK STANFORD

I dreamt of Mr. Seattle and Mr. Setter,
two bread-and-butter-stock, small-time booksellers
plying their trade in a jerry-built suburb
and scraping the dingy coins from calloused hands.

Make no mistake, they were real artful ones,
though quite unlike. Old Mr. Seattle sported
a fancy waistcoat from a chain-emporium,
with which he wore—to poke about the shop in—
a check cloth cap. He was a proper joker;
had ginger bristles sprouting from his nostrils,
and sometimes cleaned his ears with a half-burnt match.

Slim Mr. Setter, with his rubber mac,
cigarette-holder, stammer, and woollen gloves
was a different proposition altogether.
He was the young one, sponsored modern opinion,
parted his hair in the middle, and looked at his nails.
Speaking, as always, in his colourless voice,
with careful elocution he informed me
of his deep interest in psychology,
especially that of human relationships.

Then in my dream, as the raw dusk descended,
it seemed they both were pressing me to take
a mug of tea brewed on a smoking oil-stove,
with tea-leaves floating on it, while they looked
at a book whose bestial fly-blown illustrations,
against all conscience, hypnotised the sight;
and I heard Mr. Seattle asking Mr. Setter,
'How d'you like that? How d'you like that? and THAT?'

Editorial

A Letter from Tisshara

I DON'T usually obtrude my private affairs upon my readers, so probably very few of you know that I have recently undertaken the education of a prince. There were a good many jobs of this kind going after the war for ex-officers with the qualification of certain training and certain regiments, and while I am not so misguided as to claim any credit for it, still the fact remains that I had more than one offer. The idea of going abroad for several years at a high salary to live in a warm climate was very tempting. At the same time, I had to remember that little boys grow up and that there is not much future for an ex-court official who is not trained for any other profession.

Not long ago, however, I received what I suppose will be my last invitation of this kind, a suggestion that I should become tutor to His Highness, the heir apparent of Tisshara. Since communications are so difficult, I was to send a kind of sample letter in the first instance, and I received this letter (dated a week or two ago) from the Chamberlain.

Dear Mr. Fitz Gerald,

I am directed, first of all, to thank you for undertaking the charge of His Highness's further education, and to agree to the remuneration suggested, which, however, is subject to the fluctuations of currency. It is understood that your communications will arrive here through the diplomatic bag.

You ask me, Mr. Fitz Gerald, to 'put you in the picture.' Perhaps this is already done to some extent by our Legation in London. I, however, will add what I can to elucidate.

His Highness, Prince Tissy, is now eight years of age. He is very delicate and has for some time been living on a diet composed of wild rose jam and sour milk. I do not know whether the diet is lowering, but I have found His Highness a trifle melancholy of late. He is haunted by bad dreams, which may be partly inspired by his dislike of the study of politics, or indeed of sustained thought of any kind. In a dream he has related to me, it appears that he saw his maternal aunt, of whom he is very fond, walking down a corridor of the palace towards him, smiling broadly. When she came closer to him, he noticed, however, that her throat was cut from ear to ear. The Prince then in his dream summoned a doctor to his assistance; but, horrible to relate, the doctor put down his bag, knelt down on the carpet and lapped up the fallen blood.

This incident of a dream is the more remarkable because His Highness has been sheltered from unpleasantness of every kind.

A distressing feature of the Prince's lowness of spirits is his complaint of a feeling of restriction and an obsession that he is growing smaller and smaller as the days pass by. He is accustomed to measure himself—and here lies the difficulty—against the trunk of a plum tree in the courtyard of the palace, which was planted by his own father. It has been quite in vain to represent to him that this tree has been growing at a more rapid pace than he has and he persists at the moment of writing in his childish misunderstanding.

In order to divert the princeling from such mental fantasies, we are preparing, during the course of the season of roses, an entertainment of some splendour which will also, in some sense, typify the course of Life itself, since it will display most of the wonders of science, while remaining almost entirely inaccessible and perpetually unfinished.

Mr. Fitz Gerald, I am aware that you cannot be of much service in this delicate employment unless you have some notions

as to our military preparedness, also our national art, culture and politics.

In this letter I may tell you only of our political groups; later on, when we have received your reply, it will be possible for me to proceed to other subjects.

The politicians of my country, having made many long journeys to attend many conferences, have divided themselves, in the Western fashion, into the right and the left wing, expressing much solidarity. It is very difficult to say what makes men take up the career of politics in Tisshara; but, having done so, they live in the grip of illusions which are very precious to them and could hardly be wrenched away without destroying the life itself.

Let me illustrate, if only by a little, what I mean.

The Right wing live under the impression that the mass of our people are concerned with the question of personal liberty. They draw attention to the inspectors and enforcers of regulations which, in the democratic style, have been allowed to grow rather too profusely and they say that the Tissharan's home life is his castle. The people, however, are entirely indifferent on the subject, since for many years their houses have been open to intrusion of every kind. Rates and rent have been collected at their half-open doors; *nasachis* have ground out small sums of money for insurance premiums; others have called to collect on the furniture and bedding; Health Visitors have been examining their children, while inspectors opened the little boxes containing money for lamp-oil and social workers have asked penetrating questions in the front rooms.

Indeed, it may be said that their doors are perpetually ajar, and that a visitor there needs no invitation. Regulations which may seem unwelcome to a Right-wing politician are noticed by them not at all; for, as we say, snow is not white when it falls on snow.

The Left wing are also great nurses of illusion. Since it would take more space to describe these, I will leave it over till my next letter.

Both parties are enthusiasts, by the way, of our National Theatre which, as you know, is the traditional Tisshara puppet or shadow play. It is the custom of persons of all classes to attend these performances, and at home each family, even the poorest, has its own puppets (usually handed down for generations) locked away in a box which is opened only on high days and holidays. What a wealth of folkloristic interest is here! It awaits only the competent investigator. Our chief political parties, also at their Headquarters, have their curiously wrought *bourzakis* or puppets which are seen at times of crisis and of national celebration. That of the Left is a figure clothed poorly, almost in rags: the face is ghastly, an effect of hunger accentuated by the green ochre painted thickly beneath the eyes. (This effect is artistic and, as I said, folkloristic.) The pockets are empty. This figure is menaced, in the style of the ancient theatre, by another who wears the black hat and dress of a bygone day in Tisshara. His pockets are full. The *bourzaki* of the Right-wing party is somewhat different. His face is carved a truly wonderfully life-like expression of contempt and ingratitude. The head, for which a block of very dense wood has been chosen, is lowered and at his feet lies a spade, symbolic of his unwillingness to toil. During World War I an addition was made to the group of a small bath (or possibly a coffin) which is (improperly) filled with coal.

In spite of the extreme beauty of these figures, I have noticed that the public at large grow with every passing year less responsive to them. I, of course, as Chamberlain, admire them both very much.

I have photographs of them, if any should be of interest to your British Council. I have made inquiries, but cannot discover whether this Council exists to spread British folklore abroad or to encourage foreign folklore in Britain. On this, as on so much else, I trust you will inform me.

You, perhaps, are surprised, Mr. Fish Gerald, that even in a confidential document, I should so unburden myself. The truth is that my heart misgives me about the state of my country, and I have learnt that when the heart is reluctant to more than a certain extent, it is wise to heed that warning.

In expectation of your rapid reply, I remain your obedient servant.

MIRZA ABDUL COSSIM

Notes

THE UNITED STATES

In presenting a budget for the next financial year with the staggering total of £25,000 million, President Truman has issued a challenge even to the record of American financial fecundity. No less than two-thirds of this total will be devoted to the military services and for military and economic assistance to the nations of the free world. The defence appropriation envisages a total strength in the American armed forces of nearly 3,500,000, and it is the President's intention that this vast expenditure should be met as far as possible out of current income. His Republican opponents regard such a proposal as insanity and even his slender Democrat majority has shown little enthusiasm for dealing with such a problem. There are, however, bound to be sharp increases in corporation taxes, excise taxes and individual income tax rates. Mr. Snyder, the Secretary of the Treasury, suggests a four per cent increase in income tax for a start.

The Republican opposition, which is already operating under the shadow of a fresh Presidential election, now barely eighteen months ahead, has found it necessary to curb its attacks on the President's power to dispose of the country's armed services in the capacity of Commander-in-Chief, and it is more likely that their tactics will be confined to a demand that the European Nations bear a higher proportion of the necessary defence expenditure, rather than that the American total should be notably decreased.

ITALY AND FRANCE

The Italian Communist Party, numerically the strongest on our side of the Iron Curtain, has suffered a major set-back in prestige by the resignation of two of its parliamentary deputies, who have decided to become patriotic and reject Russian domination. Both deputies represent the provincial stronghold of Emilia. Aldo Cucchi, Moscow-trained and Professor of Forensic Medicine at Bologna University, has long been considered the 'eminence grise' of the local Communist party organisation, and his colleague, Valdo Magnani, was a well-known member of the resistance movement and holder of its gold medal. Magnani fought for two years with Tito's partisans, from whom he may have picked up his opinion 'that the first duty of all Communists is to defend the sacred soil of their country' and 'that all imperialism of whatever colour must be opposed.' Both deputies have been hurriedly purged by the Party as deviationists, but they managed to get their resignations in first. Their offer to resign from the Italian Parliament has been declined by the Speaker, Giovanni Gronchi. The spectacle of the Italian Communist Party's first Titoists is very attractive.

In France, the Communists' attempts to organise public demonstrations against the visit of General Eisenhower were a fiasco. Whatever doubts there may be about the willingness of the French working class to fight any particular battle, it is clear that they cannot be persuaded to fight Moscow's battles. In any case, the French Government took quick advantage of the prevailing mood to declare the World Federation of Trade Unions, the World Federation of Democratic Youth and the International Democratic Federation of Women, all of which have their headquarters in Paris, 'undesirable foreign associations'. They have been ordered to dissolve their organisations in France by the end of February. With their guns spiked and their troops reluctant on the political front, the Communists (as in England) are showing signs of concentrating once more on fomenting industrial unrest, and here they may be assisted by the inevitable rise in rents and the cost of public services due to the rearmament programme.

THE SCHUMAN PLAN

Whatever the final outcome of the Schuman Plan negotiations in Paris, its content will have undergone drastic changes from the original conception. The increasing threat from the East has placed Germany in a bargaining position which M. Schuman certainly never envisaged when he first put forward his proposals for the integration of the European coal and steel industries. The two major casualties are most likely to be the international Ruhr

authority and the original Allied proposal to 'decartelise' the heavy industries of the Ruhr. Plans for the equalisation of wages and social services in the member countries have been shelved for the time being and the two principal functions of the proposed supra-national authority will probably be the control, to some extent, of investments, based on expected American loans (for which a figure as high as $400,000,000 has been suggested) and the supervision of a system of uniform prices and tariffs within the common market. Other matters for final compromise have included French concessions in the matter of the permitted total of German steel production and the abolition of dual pricing for German coal. It is reported from Paris that no single German steel concern is to be allowed to produce more than 1,700,000 tons a year, that the proportion of the coal industry directly linked to the steel industry is not to exceed twenty-three per cent, and that the central coal marketing organisation is to be divided into smaller units. The difficult question of the relationship between the Schuman Plan authority and the Council of Europe is likely to be left to another, probably much later, date.

GERMANY

The Eastern German Government persists in its approaches to the West German Republic, trying both bribes and threats. Dr. Adenauer has, however, refused (at a press conference in order to avoid the tacit recognition of Herr Grotewohl's administration which would have been implied in a direct reply) to consider any plan for unity except on the basis of free elections and western standards of conduct. This refusal brought the menacing rejoinder that any attempt to re-arm Western Germany would be an invitation to civil war. Meanwhile the Allied and West German experts continue to meet at Petersburg to consider a German contribution to Western Defence.

For its own part the Western German Government has entered the propaganda battle with zest and the Federal Ministry for All German Affairs has published a White Paper entitled *The Red Flood*, giving details of the advance of bolshevisation in the Soviet Zone. In the schools, out of a weekly time-table of thirty hours, five hours are devoted to Russian, four to German, two to contemporary politics and two to history. Reliable tuition is ensured by a body of teachers, half of whom are Communist party members who have received an 'irregular inadequate and hurried training'. The judiciary is 'packed' in the same fashion. Out of 220 judges in the province of Brandenburg, only fifty-six have had normal legal training. More than nine hundred thousand art treasures have been removed from museums, churches and mansions in the Soviet Zone of Germany and transported to Russia. These include Raphaël's 'Sistine Madonna' from the Dresden Zwinger and the Pergamon altar from Berlin.

RUSSIA ARMS THE SATELLITES

The last six months have seen a notable accretion in the military strength of the Eastern European satellites. Something like a million and a half men are now under arms—500,000 in Poland, 250,000 in both Rumania and Czechoslovakia, 150,000 in Bulgaria and in Hungary, and about 60,000 in Albania. The state police and security forces in these countries provide a further three quarters of a million men. At least a dozen armoured divisions have been raised, largely equipped with the Russian T.34 tanks, made familiar to us in Korea. While the exact strength of these divisions is not clear, reliable reports give the total armoured strength at about 2,000 tanks. Except for Poland and Czechoslovakia, which have received a certain number of Soviet jet fighters, the air forces in these countries remain relatively weak. In equipment and training these satellite divisions are practically indistinguishable from the Red Army proper and uniforms are being gradually standardised. Soviet Generals and Staff Officers have been inserted right through the chains of command and the troops in most of the satellite armies now take an oath of allegiance to Soviet Russia. Paramilitary training has been increased, and not only do most voluntary sports organisations receive instruction in weapons and tactics, but elementary training in small arms has become a feature of the school curriculum.

THE ECONOMIC PROSPECT

ROY HARROD

It can scarcely ever have been more difficult to make economic prognostications for a coming year than it is at present. Momentous political decisions are in gestation and widely differing outcomes are possible. Some believe it not impossible that world war may come upon us. The economic consequences of actual warfare are outside the scope of what follows; we may believe that by bitter experience we know the kind of economic development to expect in that case, yet a warning is needed that experience, even very recent experience, is not an infallible guide.

Secondly, even if open world war is avoided, the situation may deteriorate further and the tempo of re-armament be progressively speeded up. Or, thirdly, it may seem sufficient to maintain the defence effort at roughly the level now envisaged. Fourthly, as a result of conversations and the settlement of some major points, there may be a distinct easement and a moderation of arms programmes. On any of these four alternatives it hardly seems likely that we shall revert to those comparatively easy conditions—so they seem now, although they did not at the time—which obtained before the invasion of Korea.

It appears that the biggest factor affecting the world economy, and thereby the British economy, will be the massive American re-armament. Hitherto Great Britain has been devoting a substantially larger proportion of her resources (at about £800 million) to defence than the Americans (at about $12,000 million). But the Americans now plan to make a tremendous climb, trebling or quadrupling their effort. Britain is hardly likely, on present showing, to keep pace; to do so, British defence expenditure as a proportion of her income would have to rise well over the £2,000 million mark. Ought she to do so, and compete valiantly? It may be that the development of events will rouse her to such competition. Although all talk of maintaining living standards here should be anathema when blood is being shed and freedom is at stake, it might be unwise at the present juncture, from the point of view of basic economic strength, which also has its defence importance, to accelerate too rapidly. Meanwhile it should be chalked up to Britain's credit that her expenditure was proportionately larger than that of the United States in recent years, and that this was all the time making its effective contribution to security in the Middle East and elsewhere.

The colossal American arms programme will have a violent impact on the whole world. Already, although the climb so far has been but a gentle one, we have had a foretaste in the sudden scarcity of many basic materials. This is naturally the first point of impact, since the need of materials for planned outputs or as reserves comes first on the line. Consideration has already been given as to how to mitigate the effect of shortages on other countries concerned with defence, and an organisation has been set up. Principles, however, have not yet been clearly defined, and the matter remains in suspense. Shortages of vital materials will impede arms programmes from the outset, and it is important that the United States should moderate its stock-piling zeal, even if this involves some risk. The need for taking such risks was evident enough in the last war, and it must not be supposed that, in the more limited programme of re-armament that we have, those lessons can be neglected. The shortages, however, may not be due to stock-piling only, and the solution of the problem may prove extremely difficult. More than ever now, expenditure in a defence programme is

loaded on to equipment as against fighting personnel, so that a given effort, expressed as a percentage of national income, draws more than before on the available supplies of basic materials. There is a natural tendency for a rich nation to think that she must have the very best equipment; nothing must be spared; many tons of valued metals are worth less than one human life. Yet, in the horrible arbitrament of war, this may not be the ultimate criterion. Available materials have got to be used in the best possible way for all purposes, and limits may have to be placed on scales of equipment and particularly on military reserve 'requirements', so as to enable the materials to go round. The countries of Europe may have a contribution to make to the fighting forces, but they cannot fight without arms. And it is also needful that the civilian economies be kept at a minimum level of efficiency, and this, too, makes its claim upon materials.

Owing to the devastating unemployment in the United States between 1929 and 1939, they were able to make their colossal war effort without any impairment of the average level of consumption of the people. This being so, it is probable that no really serious curb had to be placed on the demands of the defence departments—since there was enough for all—such as those which Mr. Churchill had to impose ruthlessly in this country. The United States is not in the same happy position now. There is no great reserve of unemployment to be taken up. She cannot proceed with her plans except by a drastic curtailment of consumption on the part of American citizens. Moreover, the high American output of civilian goods has made its contribution to sustaining the world-wide economy. The power of the free nations to make their own contributions to the common cause depends not a little on the moderation shown by the U.S. defence departments in stating their requirements. The problem is to get the maximum effective fighting force, not at any price, but in the most economical way. It would be well for the White House to devise some machinery much more drastic than anything known in the last war for sifting all statements by the service departments of what they claim to need for equipping so many squadrons and so many divisions.

The Americans are fully alive to the need for preventing inflation and have already taken most drastic steps. Yet they are not themselves satisfied that the defence against inflation is yet strong enough; they have indeed a most appalling problem, with which all must sympathise; meanwhile other countries must be on their guard against the possibility of the currents of American inflation overspilling. Here in Britain we shall have our own inflationary tendencies, and if these are reinforced by infections from the United States, this will not only give us local trouble, but handicap the world-wide cause. During the course of 1950, the project of revaluing sterling had some discussion. The basic effects of devaluation—as distinct from the more superficial effects of speculative movements of capital favourable to sterling, and the improvement in the British cash balance—have not been altogether satisfactory. Quite apart from recent developments, there was a respectable case for revaluation. We should certainly be standing ready to execute a measure of revaluation in the event of U.S. prices continuing their upward course, as they may do despite the controls there planned. Revaluation should have a permanent place on the agenda of the Treasury this year. What is important is that our authorities should be ready at any time to execute it at short notice, with all the ancillary measures well planned in advance. We should not be caught short as we were in the case of devaluation.

American re-armament is likely to carry further the recent trends in her balance of trade. She may well show a negative balance on current account, especially when her contributions, generously and wisely offered, towards other nations' rearmament, are taken into the reckoning. Her imports will be high, owing to her need to pick up materials wherever she can get them at ever-mounting prices. Thus, instead of absorbing gold steadily, she may begin to release it steadily. This gold will tend to gravitate towards the

Bank of England. The excess of exports of the outer sterling area to the dollar area, sales at high prices being sustained, will automatically bring gold into Britain. On recent showing Britain is likely to acquire gold from Europe also. Up to a point, this acquisition of gold is good; it strengthens Britain's external position both in reality and appearance; appearances are important, for it is essential that Britain, which will be the focal point outside the United States in the mobilisation of world defence, should inspire confidence in her economic strength. The acquisition of gold and the effects that have recently been made to deal with the sterling balances should be made the occasion for making the sterling and the dollar interconvertible.

There is, however, a dangerous side of all this. The inflow of gold will only be beneficial if policy is wisely adapted. Britain has now to face an unparalleled strain on her manufacturing capacity. She has her own arms programme; in the last year and a half the terms of her foreign trade, so bulky an element in her economy, have moved heavily against her, and she now has to export goods from her factories to the value of some £250 million, rising, in order to pay for no larger a volume of imports than she was getting in 1949. It is most undesirable that she should be under pressure to manufacture, in addition to the aforementioned extra goods, commodities to be sent out of the country merely to buy gold. We cannot afford at this juncture to devote hundreds of millions of pounds' worth of our factory production to buying gold.

As an immediate measure, artificial restrictions on the import of dollar goods should be relaxed both in Britain and, even more important, in the outer sterling area. It is much better for us to buy needed dollar goods—a very sound anti-inflattionary measure—than to buy mounting quantities of gold. If the outer sterling area buys more dollar goods, that will *pro tanto* relieve the strain on British manufacturing capacity. It may be argued that in due course needed U.S. products will become increasingly expensive and finally unavailable for private purchase. That may be so in due course. But the full arms programme will take some time to mount in the United States, and meanwhile there may be sundry American products that we and our sterling area friends could do with. If the goods are there, it will have helped us all to relax the restrictions on their purchase; if the goods are not there, it will have made no difference. If the goods are too expensive already, they will not be bought; anyhow they will be more expensive later. In these times it is needful to act quickly, to seize passing advantages. It is to be feared that the official mind moves slowly, and this is the fundamental drawback to central planning. For the time being, we have to make the best of it.

This is the time when Britain should strive to assume some kind of leadership in regard to economic policy in the whole sterling area. We are at peril together. Everyone knows how vital it is that British economy should continue to function smoothly. In recent years, while receiving Marshall Aid on the one hand, we have maintained on the other a considerable excess of exports to the outer sterling area, financed partly by a drawing down of the sterling balances and partly by the outflow of British capital to that area. More recently the excess of exports has been paid for by the gold which the outer sterling area has earned through its excess of exports, which has been due jointly to import restrictions and to the higher prices of exports to the dollar area. Britain, too, has had to pay the higher prices for her imports from the outer sterling area, and her excess of exports in that area has tended to decline. But the gold has continued to come in and the sterling balances—which are fundamentally claims upon our manufacturing capacity, have been mounting. With defence expenditure abroad and general expansion due to the inflationary effects of rising prices, these claims upon us are likely to be given effect. Thus there is danger from the formation of a triangle insupportable to us, namely the acquisition of gold against high priced goods by the outer sterling area, the payment of that gold to Britain, which will enable us to cover our own dollar deficit—a valuable point—but will probably exceed what is required for that purpose and constitute

a demand upon us for exportable manufactured goods. Thus the U.S. will supply the gold to the sterling area, but we shall be expected to supply an excess of goods. But that is exactly what we cannot do, save to a moderate extent, without imposing an unbearable strain on our own economy and bringing us to the brink of acute inflation.

The consequence of all this is that our prime object of policy in the coming year —we cannot think too far ahead now—in relation to the outer sterling area countries, is to get them to reduce their investment programmes to the greatest possible extent. We must, of course, do the same ourselves. The claims on British manufacturing capacity are likely to move very closely with the investment programmes in the outer sterling area. Therefore, if we want to reduce the pressure on ourselves, we must seek a reduction in those programmes. Everything must be allowed that is needful for the immediate increase of output in any part of the sterling area. But programmes which are only likely to justify themselves in the longer term should be suspended for the time being. This year and the next will be very awkward. We have to take the great strain of the arms programmmes. All the sterling area should co-operate and see that nothing is done likely to impede their smooth fulfilment. The decks must be cleared. Other projects must stand and wait.

The shortage of materials, which has already been mentioned, points in the same direction. We need to reduce competition for those materials outside the arms programme. To shortage of materials will in due course be added shortage of skilled labour and of productive capacity; fuel shortage is unhappily already with us.

It may be said that, whatever our official policy, our exports are in fact not likely to mount up, but, on the contrary, to fall. But it makes a vital difference to us how precisely this comes about. The right way from every point of view is that it should come about through reduced demands consequent upon reduced investment programmes among our customers. The alternative way is that the demands should come upon us, but that we should progressively fail to meet them through delayed delivery. This is a thoroughly vicious way—albeit the one only too likely to be realised in fact—because the incidence of delayed deliveries is indiscriminate, hurting our good customers and less important ones alike, hurting valuable projects overseas and at the same time hurting our own arms programme; for once British industry gets jammed, all claimants on it are bound to suffer; vital components will run short; the flow of production will be gravely impeded.

If we settle down into a steady high defence expenditure and succeed in adjusting ourselves to that, then in due course, without mounting production, we can have the investment programme at home and abroad gather momentum once more. That may be in 1952 or in 1953; in 1951 we need a restriction of the programmes.

Meanwhile we should not hesitate to pay out gold, wherever it is acceptable. We should use it for stock-piling, where we can do so. It is much better that a claim against us should be liquidated in gold than that it should be liquidated by the sale of the current product of British labour. It has for long been rather puzzling why the Americans do not make the dollar truly convertible, viz. exchangeable for gold on demand by individuals, instead of only by foreign governments or central banks. So long as gold is at a premium in free markets against the dollar, the United States cannot be truly said to be on the gold standard. If anyone in the world is willing to give goods in exchange for gold, he should be encouraged to do so, since this tends *pro tanto* to relieve the strain on world productive capacity, and reduces world-wide inflationary pressure.

Meanwhile the British are naturally interested in their own budget problems. First and foremost should come reduction in non-defence expenditure. Increases of tax should be carefully devised so as to avoid reducing incentives to work, whether on the part of those with high or those with low incomes. Indirect taxation appears the best recipe at present. Some reduction of food subsidies would secure a contribution from the main mass of people, while

purchase taxes could be arranged to secure equitable contributions from those of larger incomes.

The time really seems to have come, if we mean to take our problems seriously, when the question of rent restriction should be looked at on the lines suggested by Mr. Paish in his recent volume, *The Postwar Financial Problem.* While the housing shortage is a grave evil both from the point of view of the comfort of individuals and the mobility of labour, with all that that means for productive efficiency, it is absurd to put additional resources into house building when the same result could be achieved by altering the system of rent restriction. High rents should be allowed, with monetary compensation to existing rent restricted tenants and corresponding taxes on landlords. No doubt to implement such a scheme would be a most vexatious administrative problem and might even require the use of a considerable administrative personnel. But surely this is worth while, if we can thereby get the equivalent of several hundred thousand new houses without having to build them? The construction of new houses with all the necessary installations requires great economic effort. At this time of crisis, our legislators should have the courage of common sense and resort to the alternative comparatively painless method of providing new accommodation.

Skill and ingenuity in the framing of policy are required this year as never before. Some may believe that it is beyond, not the wit of man, but the wits of those men who guide our destinies, to solve all these problems. That may be deemed the penalty of deciding to have a planned economy. It is not so easy! When we have leisure to turn round, we ought really to strive to simplify our system and reduce the area of planning so that a great many more of our problems solve themselves. It must be admitted, however, that the situation itself with its recurrent wars and fears of wars produces an unprecedented challenge to human brain-power. Can the British rise to the occasion? Certainly they ought not to be distracted by party politics. They have these great economic prolems; and then they have a still greater one, namely to rise to that height of diplomacy in this fateful year, which will avail to prevent another unnecessary war.

N.A.T.O.

DEFENCE PRODUCTION BOARD

Mr. A. Henderson: The general objective of the Defence Production Board is to achieve the maximum production of military equipment in the most efficient manner, at the least cost and in the shortest time to meet the military requirements of the North Atlantic Treaty Organisation. The names of its members will with permission be circulated in the Official Report. The Board reports to the North Atlantic Treaty Defence Committee and is also in close touch with the council deputies. It is for member Governments to decide how far it is possible for them to implement its recommendations. The Board has met twice [January] . . . In the near future it is likely to meet every two or three weeks.

Mr. Teeling: While thanking the Minister for giving such a detailed description of what they hope and are proposing to do, may I ask if . . . he does not feel that this organisation, though very nice on paper, is actually doing very little so far and that many people are very dissatisfied with its progress?

Mr. Henderson: It is possibly doing much more than the Hon. Gentleman realises.

Following are the details:

Belgium: M. Henri Janne; *Canada:* Mr. E. W. T. Gill; *Denmark:* Major V. K. Laursen; *France:* Ingenieur General Kahn; *Italy:* State Counsellor E. Santoro; *Luxembourg:* M. A. J. Clasen; *Netherlands:* Dr. P. Schoenmaker; *Norway:* Colonel J. Christie; *Portugal:* Colonel L. Pina; *United Kingdom:* Sir Harold Parker, K.C.B., K.B.E., M.C.; *United States:* Mr. W. L. Batt.

—*Hansard.*

'To those who have fought against the Japanese during the campaign in Burma of 1944–45, the tactics employed by the United Nations' forces have been mystifying.' General Stopford commanded the 33rd Indian Corps in Burma, 1943–5, then the 12th Army, and finally Allied Land Forces, S.E. Asia

THE DEFENSIVE BATTLE

GENERAL SIR MONTAGU STOPFORD G.C.B., K.B.E., D.S.O., M.C.

CRITICS of the conduct of the campaign in Korea, separated by thousands of miles from the scene of hostilities, must be cautious in passing judgment on the strategy and tactics employed, as they cannot be aware of the principal factors which will have influenced the decisions of the Commanders on the spot. The greatest of these must undoubtedly have been the political considerations on which it was decided that the United Nations forces should advance north of the 38th Parallel. Having begun this advance, which immediately evoked a violent reaction from the Chinese, General MacArthur may have been instructed to disengage and withdraw, possibly in the hopes that the enemy would not follow up south of the 38th Parallel, or possibly with a view to the United Nations forces holding an impregnable defensive position in the south of the peninsula.

Without a knowledge of the political background to the campaign, it is unwise to criticise the conduct of operations since the last week of November 1950, but to those who have fought against, and been outnumbered by, the Japanese during the campaign in Burma of 1944–5, the tactics employed by the United Nations' forces have been mystifying.

As events have turned out in Korea, it appears that in mid-November the Eighth Army and the 10th Corps were widely dispersed, but advancing rapidly, the Northern Korean Army having been virtually eliminated. The United Nations' forces had complete air superiority and, so far as can be judged, a heavy preponderance in tanks and artillery. Air reconnaissance across the Yalu River was prohibited for political reasons, but one is led to wonder if the fullest use had been made of all available resources, such as a central intelligence organisation and agents, for obtaining information about the concentration of Chinese armies which must have been building up over a period of many weeks. General MacArthur's difficulties in this respect must undoubtedly have been great, since no overt action could be taken, as the United Nations and China were not at war; but it is difficult to believe that the enemy's counter-offensive should have come as a complete surprise.

Conversely, the initiative in gaining information lay with the Chinese, who can have had little difficulty in obtaining the United Nations' order of battle through their North Korean allies and in picking up much of value through the Press of the world before the institution of a strict censorship. This view is borne out by the fact that the main strength of the initial Chinese offensive was directed against the South Korean Army, which was the weakest link on the United Nations' side.

So far as can be gathered, this counter-stroke caught the United Nations' forces when they were off-balance, being widely dispersed and not anticipating any serious opposition to their advance, but however unsound their tactical dispositions, their optimism may have been founded on a faulty political appreciation of China's attitude towards the conflict as a whole.

The disturbing fact remains that, since China entered the war, the United Nations' forces have carried out a continuous withdrawal, without imposing any serious

delay on the enemy's advance. What the ultimate intentions of the Commanders on the spot may be, have not, very rightly, been disclosed, and we are assured that everything is going according to plan; but those who have taken part in such operations —particularly when no opportunity has been given for hitting back at the enemy— know how dispiriting they can be. The infantry are ordered to prepare defensive positions, which in the frostbound condition of Korea must be a disheartening task; similarly the artillery have to dig-in their guns; Signals have to set up their network of communications; forward dumps of ammunition, equipment, clothing and food have to be established—and then the order is given to withdraw once more. Tactics of this kind, however necessary, are undoubtedly bad for morale, particularly when the defenders have the means for hitting the enemy hard with their tanks and artillery. Full use appears to have been made of the United Nations' air forces and navies to inflict casualties on the advancing enemy, but it has been proved that their bombing and fire alone cannot stop an offensive. So far as can be judged, the opening phases of the operations after China entered the war bore a close resemblance to the Japanese invasions of Malaya and Burma, as in each case the armies consisted of a high proportion of infantry in relation to supporting arms, and these infantry were trained to operate across country, depending largely on the supplies which they could carry themselves or pick up in villages as they advanced. They had a minimum of heavy mechanical transport and were adept at infiltrating into the defenders' positions, which were then attacked from the front, flanks and rear.

During the early days of the campaigns in Malaya and Burma, the Commonwealth forces had no experience of these tactics; they were outnumbered by the Japanese infantry; they were encumbered by a mass of transport which blocked the few existing roads; they had not been trained to operate in the jungle, nor could they be maintained if once surrounded, as the technique of air supply had not been developed, and finally insufficient reserves were available to carry out large-scale counter-attacks.

However, as the result of the bitter experiences of 1942–3, a new tactical doctrine was evolved, based on the theory that however mobile the enemy might be, sooner or later he must open up a land-line of communications, along which to pass his essential supplies. If, having advanced across country, this L of C could be denied him by vigorous defence at selected places, his forward movement would eventually break down, and he could either be destroyed by counter-attack or be compelled to withdraw through lack of food, ammunition and the many articles of equipment needed daily. The crux of the problem was the maintenance of the defence which would probably be surrounded by the enemy's tactical infiltration and envelopment. This problem was to be solved by air supply which, by the beginning of 1944, had become a practical proposition owing to the gradual weakening of the Japanese air force and the building up of that of the British and Americans.

This tactical conception was first put to the test by the 5th and 7th Indian Divisions, of the 15th Corps, in Arakan in February 1944. On this occasion, due to a sound appreciation of the situation, the probable line of Japanese action had been foreseen; orders were issued that any unit or formation which might find itself cut off would hold fast, and Headquarters 14th Army, in conjunction with 3rd Tactical Air Force, made the necessary administrative preparations for any garrisons which might become beleaguered to be supplied by air. In the meantime arrangements had been made by Headquarters, 11th Army Group, for two more divisions to be held in readiness to counter-attack if required.

In the event, operations developed as anticipated. The Japanese carried out an encircling movement with some 8,000 men round the eastern flank and rear of the 5th and 7th Indian Divisions which were promptly put on air supply; the counter-attack by 26th and 36th Indian Divisions was launched, and after several days of bitter fighting the enemy withdrew completely defeated, leaving over 5,000 dead counted on the ground.

This action, though comparatively small, was an historic success as it destroyed the myth of Japanese invincibility and paved the way for subsequent operations of a similar nature, but on a much larger scale, at Imphal and Kohima, where the Japanese 15th Army was pulverised after three months' heavy fighting.

It may be interesting to record that, as the result of these tactics, in the period between February and December 1944 the 14th Army destroyed five Japanese divisions, one Indian National Army Division and severely mauled two more Japanese Divisions; 50,000 enemy dead were counted, added to which there must have been many thousands of wounded. This victory was achieved at a cost of 40,000 battle casualties of all natures in the 14th Army.

Considering these operations in relation to events in Korea, and disregarding the higher strategical plan which must by now be in operation, one is tempted to wonder whether the adoption of similar defensive tactics might not have delayed the opening phases of the Chinese counter-offensive, thereby keeping up the morale of the United Nations' forces whilst giving time to clear the depots in the rear areas if it were intended to conduct a sustained withdrawal.

No special field training in this method of defence is necessary for the troops, as was shown during the operations in Arakan already referred to, of which the 5th and 7th Indian Divisions had had no previous experience. Certain essentials are, however, necessary, and the first of these is that the attitude of mind of all ranks, starting with senior commanders, should be attuned to the idea of complete units and formations being temporarily surrounded, whilst their supplies are delivered and casualties evacuated by air. At the same time military resources must be such that an adequate reserve is available under the hand of the higher command, with which to launch a counterstroke from outside the beleaguered area with a view to hammering the attackers against the anvil of the defence.

The ability to maintain forces by air under such conditions presupposes a degree of air superiority, though this need only be temporary and local in order to cover the air lanes whilst the transport aircraft are operating.

Commodities can either be 'airlanded', if the defenders hold an airstrip which is reasonably free from hostile ground interference, or they can be 'dropped'. A point often not realised is that, if airlanding is possible, the aircraft can carry a much greater load of stores, as the cumbersome packing and parachute equipment—necessary for dropping—can be dispensed with. Furthermore, and a most important point from the aspect of maintaining morale, is that casualties can be flown out in large numbers in the returning aircraft direct from the battle area, though the inability to do this when supplies are dropped has on occasions in Korea been overcome by the use of helicopters.

In order that air supply may function smoothly, it is essential that the Army shall have set up carefully co-ordinated administrative machinery through which the defenders submit their requirements by wireless, and by means of which rations, ammunition, medical stores, clothing and even on occasions water, are collected at the despatching airfields for loading and taken over for distribution on delivery.

Reverting to the army aspect of this system of defence: any military formation, from a brigade to a complete Army, may be ordered to hold a given area of country in order to deny to the enemy the use of a road or railway line of communications which may be essential to the development of his future operations. The area defended by the 4th Corps at Imphal in 1944 covered several hundred square miles, and was so sited as to cover the two roads from Burma which met in the town and then led on to India.

A defended area of this nature is made up of a number of localities, each of which is organised to defend itself against attack from any direction, and is within range of supporting artillery fire and counter-attack from its immediate neighbours. Under these circumstances, which may prevail in any future war, either in the East or West, it is essential that every man of every arm and administrative corps should be trained to be proficient in the use of the personal weapon with which he

is armed, and not to regard it as being of secondary importance to his duties as a specialist: furthermore, he must be taught elementary infantry tactics. The value of this was well exemplified in Burma, initially by the Japanese and then—as the result of experience—by British and Indian troops of administrative units which were frequently used to hold sectors of defensive perimeters and to conduct patrols. In this connection it is worthy of note that this type of training proved to be of considerable value in raising the morale of what had hitherto been regarded as 'back area units'.

Although East is East and West is West, the indications are that if war should break out in Europe, the armies of the United Nations will have to face an initial attack by an enemy possessing numerical superiority. Should such circumstances arise, it will be as well not to have neglected the lessons learnt in Malaya, Burma and Korea and to inculcate, whilst there is time, an attitude of mind amongst the public and the Services towards accepting the necessity for stout-hearted defence, with no thought of withdrawal.

Such an attitude can only be induced by psychological training which, so far as the Army is concerned, must have its foundation in the minds of senior commanders. The troops must be trained to live 'hard', existing on bare essentials and foregoing the comparative luxuries which are expected under peacetime conditions.

Furthermore, they must be provided with the right type of weapons to enable them to withstand the scale of attack anticipated, whether by infantry, tanks or aircraft, and every man of every unit in the field must have confidence in the weapon with which he is armed.

Finally, all ranks must be taught to endure the psychological strain of temporary isolation in the knowledge that the endurance of each one of them is necessary to complete the pattern of the defence. All armies accept the principle of defending a position to the last man and the last round of ammunition but, in fact, the Japanese are the only nation in recent times who have habitually lived up to this doctrine. Having experienced the difficulties which they caused us by their fortitude, we must be prepared to stand and fight it out when occasion demands, if we are to conduct a successful land defence against superior numbers.

PARIS POEM

HARRY ROSKOLENKO

The stumbling trees, stumps of ancient
Growing, with candelabra figments,
Hug the blue vapour above the Seine.

La Frette is a summer canopy
Of birds, whistlers of green music,
An opera of small notes in poplars.

Long tugs, canoes of raging commerce
Roam their Deisel softness down
The angles of water, carving the trees.

It is a French painting softly breaking
The air, the crucifixion of gentility
Standing in vapour in the midst of nothing.

MALRAUX AND THE 'PSYCHOLOGY OF ART'

'Que faire d'une âme, s'il n'y a ni Dieu, ni Christ?'
(La Condition Humaine)

JOHN COCKING

'DOG that is born of a bitch hath but a short time to live, and is full of misery'; Evelyn Waugh's terrible parody thrusts home the sense of Malraux's definition of man as 'the only animal who knows he must die.' Malraux is obsessed with the idea of death, and in a characteristic way. Gautier and Baudelaire were fascinated and revolted by the physical corruption of beauty; Malraux is concerned with the body not as beauty but as power. Mallarmé, whose conception of the artist has a good deal in common with Malraux's, was serenely disdainful of *un peu profond ruisseau calomnié la mort* which, for the poet, is the gateway to the autonomy of the poetic; death is right in the middle of Malraux's novels because it is his will constantly to accuse it as his most redoubtable enemy.

For Yeats:

> Nor fear nor hope attend
> The dying animal;
> Man awaits his end
> Fearing and hoping all.

In stature Malraux's heroes are not unworthy of Yeats's, 'Great man in his pride'; they are seen often enough 'confronting murderous men.' If they cannot 'cast derision upon supersession of breath', they meet it not with anything that can ordinarily be called fear, certainly not with any kind of hope. They are exasperated. They are, in the full sense of both words, desperately angry.

For them, death is the central problem of human destiny because it is the final frustration of man's will. No less than Nietszche, Malraux *experiences* life as will. No less than Corneille, whose Auguste finds in the act of forgiveness the gesture of supreme mastery:

> Je suis maître de moi comme de
> l'univers;
> Je le suis: je veux l'être . . .

Like Nietszche, and unlike Auguste, Malraux knows there is a very real sense in which he is *not* the master either of himself or of the universe. If he experiences life as will, he experiences it also as lucidity; each serves the other as indeed it does in the moral climate of Descartes and Corneille; but the classical assurance of the Augustan attitude is, for Malraux, as outmoded as the pleasant metaphysical fictions on which it was based. His consistent rejection of consolation has more than once earned him the reproach of spiritual defeatism. For Malraux's hero religion and classical humanism are dead. In times of faith, men had realised the tragedy of becoming but resolved it in a spurious transcendence; classical humanism had pretended that the world of becoming is not tragic at all. Man is now faced with the knowledge that he is alone in a hostile universe which imposes frustration, suffering and death; and the individual is alone among men.

But to this situation he cannot submit. His sense of responsibility is as clear as its aim is obscure. He must act, knowing that he is bound to be humiliated by the meaningless destiny against which he pits himself. If he can envisage his defeat, he can never accept it. If he cannot become master of his destiny, he will be a master in the face of it; will springs more eternal than hope. To what shall the will be directed? Part of the answer, already arrived at in the novels, is that war must be made on the causes of human suffering; the other part, suggested in *Les Noyers de l'Altenburg* and developed in the three volumes of the *Psychologie de l'Art*, is that

the supreme exercise of will lies in the creation of the work of art: *l'art est un anti-destin.*

Man, in *Les Noyers de l'Altenburg*, is defined by his *aptitude à mettre le monde en question*, his *inability* (when he does not run away from his manhood) to take things as they are presented to him by the world in which he finds himself. This aptitude, this inability is the key to what, in human action, is specifically human, and for Malraux the moral problem is not that of avoiding sin, but of making proper use of the liberty to create—not that of the weak man concerned with his struggle to fulfil the prescriptions of a normative ethic, but that of the strong man able to do right and concerned with his responsibility to decide what it is right to do. The problem of human destiny is considered in terms of Man, not of men. In the novels, each individual is working out within himself the problem of Man; adversaries as well as comrades address to their problems the highest part of themselves. Camus, in *La Peste*, sees the moral problem as the pursuit of sainthood without the help of religion; Malraux puts the central question of his work into the mouth of Tchen, in *La Condition Humaine*: 'What is to be done with a soul, if there is neither God, nor Christ?' To Malraux and many of his contemporaries, the writers of what has been called the 'Promethean' literature of modern France, this problem is the problem of Western civilisation.

In the *Psychologie de l'Art*, the problem of destiny is considered in terms of civilisations rather than of individuals. In all periods before our own, the artist, in the act of creation, is seen as the focal point of all that is highest in his civilisation and in himself (though, as we shall see, the expression of values is not the essential element in the work of art). The creation of art is the most privileged form of human action. In the preface to *Le Temps du Mépris*, Malraux suggested that the aim of his own art was to create in his readers a consciousness of the unknown greatness within themselves; in himself he has come to feel that consciousness at its most intense through the visual arts which extend its range over the whole of human history. It was a statue which, in *Les Noyers de l'Altenburg*, suggested the 'divinity' of man —'man also has made man out of clay.' Art, for Malraux, whatever else it may be, is the only token of the absolute in our time.

Thibaudet said somewhere that the literature of nineteenth-century France began with Chateaubriand's 'poetry of religion' and ended with the Symbolists' 'religion of poetry'. The last chapters of the *Psychologie* are concerned with the 'religion of painting', and throughout the three volumes Malraux is concerned with the relationship between this and the 'painting of religion', a relationship which brings in issue the whole history of painting, and indeed, if we include statues and objects, the whole history of visual art. The religion of poetry, the religion of painting —these, too, are related, as Malraux hints:

'The bond which unites painting to poetry . . . is less clearly realised than the bond which unites it to religion. Yet not only was poetry for centuries, the whole world over, one of the elements in painting, but it was on occasions the supreme mode of action of poetry; with Dante dead, Shakespeare yet unborn, what are the poets of Christendom compared with Piero della Francesca, Fra Angelico, Botticelli, Piero di Cosimo, Leonardo, Titian, Michelangelo? What verse of Watteau's day is worthy of him?' From the Renaissance to Delacroix, 'painting is poetry as a plant flowers.'

Malraux never specifically discusses poetry, but all his conclusions about painting can be transposed into poetic terms. In poetry and the visual arts, our own and the last centuries have seen the growth of the ambition of 'purity'—of autonomy and integrity; the sloughing off of the traditional assumption that they were 'imitative' arts, and the increasing contempt of genius for the 'academic' artists who accepted the dual submission to the world of appearances and to current moral values. Painters and poets drew together in the Bohemian world of the early nineteenth century, and lived in a quieter and more intimate exchange of ideas and

sensibility as the century wore on. Increasingly withdrawn from the life of their time, they adopted a hieratic attitude before their art. The *poète maudit*—Vigny was the first to imagine him, Baudelaire to live the experience—was followed by the *peintre maudit*; does Manet head the list, or Courbet, to whom Baudelaire credited against his realism 'the disinterested, absolute love of painting', the integrity which was to be the grace of the new religion? For Malraux, the two phrases in modern painting are marked by Manet and Picasso, but Courbet comes in for a mention—in so far as he is not a realist but a poet, and Malraux puts his finger on an important link between, in literature, the Realist-Naturalist ideology and the Baudelaire-Symbolist ideology, when he points out that both Zola and Mallarmé were warring against the metaphysical and specifically aesthetic fictions of the past.

Among writers, the first of the nineteenth-century rebels saw their own society in a decline, though it might be a falling-away from the Middle Ages or from Athens. 'Dans quelle époque, mon Dieu, m'avez-vous fait naître?' Flaubert, speaking for most of his kind, was quoting Saint Polycarp, one of the Christian Fathers. Like most men who had been near enough to a religious view of life to be said to have lost it, and had enough metaphysical depth to realise what this meant, he looked back at a live religion with nostalgia. But the problem, it seemed, was then a problem only for the artist, and the artist had to solve it as best he could, in an isolated world of art. Mallarmé told Verlaine that in his view the contemporary political situation—in 1885—was an interregnum as far as the poet was concerned, and not to be meddled in; he professed himself incompetent in all but the absolute. He was by no means incapable of moral or political indignation—in his twenties he had said that, if he flew the red flag, it was because he hated scoundrels and detested force—but the throw of Igitur's dice was to be his liberation from history, and Mallarmé, planning the throw, considered himself relieved of temporal responsibility. The artist, he felt, must satisfy the demands of his art as he conceives them, not only ignoring the traditional assumptions about the need for communication, but profoundly mistrusting the interpretation of any mind but his own.

The rift between the kind of art society will accept and the kind which genius creates, which began to open in the middle of the last century and split into a chasm after the First World War, is an important part of the evidence which Malraux considers.

'When, with the silence of history re-established, on the ruins of the Revolution there appeared the Rebel; when the victorious Bourgeoisie had called forth no world of imagination but one by which it was itself denied (what link had it with Delacroix's *Crusaders*, even Couture's *Caesar*, even Cormon's *Cain*?), there co-existed for the first time, not two schools, but two different functions of painting. Future historians, before the only surviving works of art of an atomised Europe of which all trace had disappeared from their memory, would have to suppose, between 1870 and 1914, in Paris, the existence of two civilisations, antagonistic and isolated.'

The rift, it seems, marks the 'death of God'. Modern man, and supremely the modern artist, has to find his way in a world 'amputated, in a hundred years, of dreams it had maintained since the age of the cave-dwellers.' If the 'independents' opposed bourgeois values, 'it was not in the name of the proletariat who, in the dealers' windows, preferred Bonnat to Degas. Let the sociologist have a care; the pictures which succeed those bought by the aristocrats are not those which are bought by the bourgeois, but those which are bought by nobody.'

If these artists, painters and poets seemed to be painting and writing outside history, with Malraux and his contemporaries, history is back, not only with the artist but in his art; in the name of authenticity or simply of action the Hamlet, who, in Mallarmé, was 'reading in the book of himself', is once more about the business of screwing up his resolve to kill the king. 'To what destiny, then, is this young generation dedicated—this violent generation, wonderfully armed against itself, and freed from the base vanity of giving the

name of greatness to the scorn of a life to which it cannot attach itself?'[1] The nineteenth-century Manichee, who saw life as dark and art as light, and whose activity and heroism were confined to the struggle through the media of his art towards transcendence, as the Cather's activity was confined to the struggle through his contemplative askesis towards unity with God, is still alive in Malraux, but alive within another Manichean hero whose business is with Mithras rather than Ormuzd. The activism which is the differential between East and West, and which, in its modern degree, so many moderns fear as 'cosmic impiety', is for Malraux the essence of history; and history is the word man shouts defiantly after the last of the Gods retreating into the Void; history is man's battle against everything, in the universe, that threatens man. Other civilisations have been characterised by their religious beliefs; ours is not the civilisation of our agnosticism, but of our conquest of the world.

But why is this civilisation of conquest unable—as Malraux admits it is—to express in art the values of its conquering spirit? What we lack, it is often said, is a 'myth'; Malraux calls it a means of communion. The true function of the art of a living religion, he says, is not that of assuring us against death, but of providing us with a defence against destiny through an immense communion. We are beginning to know what it is we lack; the *Psychologie de l'Art* is a contribution to that knowledge.

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The place of study is the *musée imaginaire*,[2] the ideal museum in which we, for the first time in history, can include, through the circulation of reproductions, the whole treasure of human art, including the art of Africa and Polynesia. These styles entered Europe by invitation rather than invasion, but were mobilised on arrival into instruments of war; like the Gothic, they represented an 'accusation' of the academic by a number of vital styles whose values, violently opposed to it, had something in common with each other. An ideology evolved to support the first arrivals from the Congo had to be modified to do duty also for the ancestral figures from the New Hebrides and, as the field widened, broke down altogether. The works remained; a hierarchy—or at least an order—established itself, and seemed to be an aesthetic—at least not an ideological—order. In this account, Malraux shares the preferences of his time but refuses the narrower sectarianisms; the Africans and Polynesians are brought into a relationship not only with each other but with Greece and the High Renaissance; this has been made possible, he says, not by a gradual extension of sensibility but by the breakdown of the criterion of beauty, which has taken its place within a wider notion of art as the laws of gravity have taken their place within a wider notion of physics. Taine had some difficulty in justifying a liking for Rembrandt as well as Michelangelo; we, in our generation, are the first civilisation to inherit all the civilisation of the earth.

Not the knowledge, but the civilisation. We are not to add up or sift or re-combine the statements, revelations or intuitions of the past; no question here of art as cognition. What we *know*, from comparing one work with another, one artist's output with another's, from following the development of styles which, as styles, are 'breaks' with the world of appearances and, as modified by great artists, 'breaks' also with preceding styles, is something about man—his courage, creativeness, uniqueness, his will to be human in defiance of the non-human. We learn nothing of what is not man, except that, for man, it is part of his hostile destiny. Yet where the relativist sees in the diversity of the religions of past civilisations the justification of our own agnosticism, Malraux sees the eternity of man's determination to call the world in question in the name of what he finds highest in himself; the art before which he is most moved and most moving is that created in a spirit of religious reverence, and particularly the art of the Middle Ages. His main distinction is between art which is sacred and art which is not.

Not quite between sacred and profane art. The most profane styles are those which are most subservient to the world of appearances, which aspire to subservience. They are admitted to Malraux's Ideal

[1] Malraux: *D'une Jeunesse européenne* [2] *Le Musée imaginaire* is the title of the first volume of the *Psychologie de l'Art*

Musuem as evidence but do not merit contemplation; their place is perhaps in the cellars whence they may emerge from time to time for purposes of illustration. They are the styles of classical Rome, the minor Dutch painters, the English portrait-painters, the academic conformists of the last century (Malraux has probably never seen the Royal Academy in this); if Tang art stays upstairs (and Sung—but Malraux does not quite know what to do with Sung, except to put it by for the next stage in the development of taste), Ming art goes down and with it the art of the Moguls. The styles which remain in honour are *le style de l'eternel*—styles which have in common the sense of the sacred; certain 'religious styles'—like those of Rembrandt and El Greco; and those of the painters for whom painting was itself an absolute value—like Vermeer and the moderns.

But Greek art, too, is profane—the first truly profane style in history. In the *Tentation de l'Occident,* Malraux distinguished between the spirit of the West, finding its sense of purpose in the conquest of the world, offering the world to man, and the spirit of the East, concentrated upon the disciplines which will free the soul from its humanity, offering man to eternity. In classical Greece the Western confidence was reflected in the statues of Phidias and Praxiteles, whose smiling faces reflected a conviction of the beneficence of nature. Greece gave to man a godlike freedom which we, like the Chaldeans whose image of the cosmos was the implacable wheeling of the stars in the night-sky, like the mediaeval Christians for whom life took its meaning from the crucifixion, now know to be an illusion. 'The theocratic spirit of the East had extended to profane objects the style evolved for sacred figures, and the rouge-spoons of Egypt seem to be carved for the dead; the Greece of Hermes and Amphitrite managed to impose on the gods the ideal forms of men.' Sacred art is based upon a true perception of man's relation with the world—that he is different from it, and threatened by it, and must take arms against it.

The style of the eternal reappeared, after the decline of the Greek style through Rome, in the Byzantine and the Romanesque; and itself declined, in the religious but not 'sacred' art of the Renaissance and the Counter-Reformation. If the Renaissance was not pagan, within Christianity Europeans began once more to query the eternal in the name of man, and established a dialogue between Athens and Calvary. The signature of the individual artist replaced the 'trade-mark'; universal communion gave way to the dialogue of the individual with the terms of his religion; faith was transmuted into the high poetry of the great Renaissance painters; truth began to hide behind the promise of what might be true. Outwardly the religion remained the same; the spirit of man, reflected in the styles of art, underwent a change as profound as that between Egypt and Greece. Christianity moved from the absolute to the relative. Eternity withdrew from the world, and was replaced by the only idea man could find worthy to succeed it—the idea of history.

From this constant flux of styles, slow in the ancient civilisations but rapid in our own, what constant image of the artist can be drawn? Malraux's view, like T. S. Eliot's, implies a separation of the artist and the man. Man, we have seen, is defined by his capacity to query the non-human in terms of the highest of himself. He may find his highest self represented in the fundamental values of his time; and then he will submit to those values and express their poetry in his art. But he may find his highest self in conflict with the values of his time, and then he will strive to change them. The great artist, supremely endowed with humanity, is the supreme questioner; if, as a man, he submits to the values of his time, as an artist he can never surrender his creativeness. In the style he inherits he finds a break with the world of appearances; but he must make it *his own* break, and to do this he breaks with the style he has inherited. The aim of the artist is the possession of an autonomous, coherent and significant world; his conquest may be over the visible or the invisible, over a world of frantic joy or a world of impenetrable and threatening mystery. But it is always a conquest, a possession. 'Every deep faith implies the submission of the artist to the world of his

faith, but his effacement as an individual does not imply that of his art . . .' The artist ravishes his own world from the world of appearances and the worlds of his predecessors, and the victories of artists over their destinies as men add up to the victory of art over the destiny of man.

The artist, whose aim is to reform the world, sees the work of other artists as styles, as systems of forms. The tendency is clear enough in our own day. But if *all* art is equal before our art, as systems of forms, not all art is equal before our 'artistic culture'. The values of past civilisations are present in our own in varying proportions. In the art of those civilisations we see their values reflected in the poetry which is an essential attribute of painting and sometimes its principal mode of appeal. In the eyes of our 'artistic culture', there is a hierarchy among styles, and among individual works of art. By learning to respond to the styles of other ages, we have annexed to our own culture the best those ages could create. The disappearance of the eternal from our civilisation is important, not as the sign of a decadence, but as the condition of a conquest. Only when our own religion had passed from the absolute to the relative could we afford to respond to the absolutes of the East.

'If the gods of other races have not become ours, they have ceased to be demons in order to become forms; but, as they have not become abstract forms, they have not lost all their meaning with their divinity—even when that meaning is suggested rather than transmitted to us, as in the case of the sacred figures of Egypt. If . . . the idiom of a work penetrates to us, we respond to it as to the language of an artist who, even if he is anonymous, profits, on our behalf, from the spiritual wealth which he expresses.'

Art provides us with 'an absolute made relative'. If 'the art of a live religion is not that of an assurance against death, but that of a defence against destiny by an immense communion', we, who are the first civilisation to have no religion, no communion, can commune through the art of others. We have turned our cathedrals into museums; but we have found that our museums can be centres of communion.

And the modern artist, aware of the receding of the eternal, offers communion too. Painters had sometimes realised, more or less obscurely, that painting can contain an absolute within itself; Franz Hals had a slight, Vermeer a far greater, insight into the nature of this absolute. The mediaeval artist produced 'a plane surface covered with colours assembled in a certain order' to have access to a world of faith; a painting of the Virgin was to *be* the Virgin. Michelangelo assembled his lines and colours so that *a* Virgin might be worthy of *the* Virgin. Vermeer assembled his elements so that his plane surface might become a painting. His object was a secret object, his absolute a secret absolute until modern painters were forced to proclaim their devotion to the absolute of painting in the absence of any other and, in doing so, to open a new communion to any man who is willing, by accepting painting, to accede to it.

It is within this communion that the other, with the works of the past, is widest and deepest; we know that the works of different Christian centuries 'were in the service of different kinds of feelings; but art was subordinated to them, and we subordinate them to art.' Our Ideal Museum has convinced us, and so justified itself, that the primary aim of every artist was to serve art. Within it we are conscious of the greatness of man, and the possibility of escape from man's loneliness—man's in the presence of the world and the individual's in the presence of other men. In the novels of Malraux, the revolutionary hero progressed from action in its negative aspect of escape into positive action and the comradeship of a common aim; in *Les Noyers de l'Altenburg* and the *Psychologie* comradeship at last becomes communion.

* * *

'Wherever one opens him, he is saying the same thing.' This is very nearly true of Malraux. But it was first said of Hegel, who has also been called 'the greatest adventure-story writer in the world'. If Malraux harps over much for the detached, inquiring intelligence, the fine, sombre music of his prose is a reward for the spirit. The world from which he sets out may not be quite the world as we see it. 'The human

condition may well be as he sees it,' writes Gaëtan Picon,—'but men do not see it so, and his lucidity may seem to them to be falsehood. For most of them, how many little joys, paltry blindnesses, petty cowardices overlay the rock of loneliness and anguish! Is not everything easier than it seems to Malraux, and why not give oneself up to these things? Is there not at the heart of life, and beneath its humblest manifestations, something tender and relaxed, a simple, natural suavity, which it has been given to others to know, so that living is an act which carries all its meaning with it?'

It may seem that there is as much self-pity as true tragedy in Malraux's view of the destiny of man; and though I have heard it said that self-pity is the modern equivalent of the *accidie* of the Middle Ages, it seems arbitrary to decide that the religious is nearest to absolute truth in the dark night of the soul. No doubt, though, that the extension of the pity of tragedy into a permanent attitude is one of the marks of our time; pity overflows particular occasions as it did for Mackellar in *The Master of Ballantrae*: 'I was overborne with a pity almost approaching the passionate, not for my master alone, but for the sons of Man.' In Malraux the pity never deliquesces, but hardens into heroic resolution.

It is this determination to rise above whatever tragedy there be that inspires the moral beauty of Malraux's latest book and marks its author as an artist rather than a philospher. I. A. Richards distinguished, in a recent essay, between 'the sense in which poetry matters because it is creative' and 'the sense in which we say it is creative because we feel it matters.' It is a distinction of which reason is aware in reading the *Psychologie*. The insistence on art as creativeness, mastery, lucidity, as revolt rather than revelation has become more and more familiar since Valery. It was virtually in Baudelaire's doctrines, where art as revolt against nature co-existed with art as revelation through nature. The revolt which has left the contemporary artist without a metaphysical transcendence has left him with the transcendent experience of art; he must reconcile the two as best he may, even if he is reduced to saying, as I. A. Richards did in the *Principles of Literary Criticism*, that the experience of great art is not a sign that all is well in eternity but that all is well, here and now, in the nervous system. This is, at least, an answer for the intelligence about what the artist is trying to achieve when he refuses his assent to the incoherence of his destiny; though it is a solution which could hardly appeal to Malraux, who sees in Eastern mysticism a surrender of the self to biological rhythms. Malraux does not tackle the problem of deciding what makes for absoluteness in the absolute which is painting. The *Psychologie*, to use one of its own turns of phrase, is a dialogue between a keen intuition of the value of artistic experience and an *a priori* moral attitude.

Which means that Malraux, in spite of his title, is concerned with experience, not nervous events; and with experience in terms of values which are valuable for us. The *Psychologie* is as powerful as the novels. If they are made of the stuff of tragedy, this is an epic; an epic the germ of which lies in Banville's *La Voie lactée*, the idea of which (in poetic terms), occurred to Mallarmé when the vision of the Void was followed by the vision of the Beautiful: *La Gloire du Mensonge* or *Le Glorieux Mensonge* was to be its title, but the theme was at last expressed in a sonnet, *Quand l'ombre menaça*:

Oui, je sais qu'au lointain de cette nuit, la Terre
Jette d'un grand éclat l'insolite mystère,
Sous les siècles hideux qui l'obscurcissent moins.

L'espace à soi pareil qu'il s'accroisse ou se nie
Roule dans cet ennui des feux vils pour témoins
Que s'est d'un astre en fête allumé le génie.

Malraux differs from his nineteenth-century predecessors in his recognition of action. When we have been reading of our decadence, of our miserable self-sufficiency, of our probable decline towards the fate of past civilisations; when we have been told that 'the poetry of our time doesn't matter much, it is a last echo of something

important that was alive long ago', it is at least encouraging to be reminded that some of our convictions can be equated to the secret presuppositions of the minds of the past whose spiritual quality we most admire, and that if our political supremacy is being challenged, it is because we have awakened our former subjects to the supremacy of our spiritual values. If Malraux had not already used the name for one of his novels, he might have called his latest book *La Voie royale.*

'Il ne surgit pas tous les matins, ni même tous les siècles, un type d'homme qui perd sa relation millénaire avec le cosmos, et conquiert le monde.'

EVENTS OF VENETIAN EVENINGS

GEORGE BARKER

WHAT, anyhow, is a beginning? A beginning is a place from which an end can be first envisaged. I want simply to speak of my love for Italy. The end that I envisage is that I shall have spoken of it as clearly and as obscurely as the nature of this love dictates. It is not always possible to make sense of the utterances of the heart.

I left the house and soon found myself lost in a part of Venice that had apparently never existed until I set foot in it. He was a very clever man who knew where the streets stopped and his ruminations about them began. For this is the hallucinatory city: it exists entirely as an idea in the mind of the person who is at any moment most enjoying it. There are mosaics that speak eighteen languages, and smells that arise from the corpse of Beaudelaire's murdered father. Here wishes take on the inhabitability of mansions: the fish is infinitely more familiar here than the internal combustion engine, and the only possible disasters are letters from the scientifically specified world of other people or death by water. O visions of opium, who ever before embraced any one of your inhabitants! The birds fly in and out of Venice with the air of pragmaticians crying: 'Observe. This really exists in spite of being a mirage.' Also there are no motor-cars, no horse-drawn carriages, no automatic scooters, no omnibuses, no subways: there are only fish and whores.

3

Since I arrived in this city of overblown domes and exaggerated biographies, I have been conscious of an excessive egomania: the first person singular is as hard to escape here as one's own image repeated in the water. It is another of the reasons why Venice so delights us: we are each of us two here. Of course, it rains. But the rain is an act of charity, not a chastisement.

Where a dark terrace of arches runs along by a secondary canal, and then meets a small stone bridge with balustrades, two people, a fat man and a dirty woman, stand on the little bridge in gesticulatory talk. The man wears sun glasses and carries a shopping bag full of vegetables and newspaper parcels and fruit. The woman looks as disreputable and as unhappy as a housewife who has just lost her home. I walked along by the terrace of arches until I came to the bridge. I said to them in English, not expecting an answer:

'Excuse me. What is the time?'

And together, in Italian, they replied:

'It is time to get lost.'

There is that slab of red marble inserted into the steps of the Basilica of St. Mark on which the head of Frederick Imperator rested when he abased his neck to the heel of the Servant of the Servants of God: and here I found a young Sienese woman sitting without a child in her arms. Renowned as they are, and as they have

always been, for their great beauty, the women of Siena become mothers with an alacrity in which there is little love, and with a resignation in which there is nothing animal. Dedicated to our Lady of Grazie, what destiny awaits their beauty save its own marvellous multiplication? I could have spoken to her of love in the following terms:

'Since it is in obedience to the stars that we are happiest, why should we contend with a Fate determined to embarrass us with its favours? Why should the unfortunate exclaim against the dignity of that misery upon which they find themselves so grudgingly crucified? When the best of human beings is discovered, he will be found sitting alone, naked, in a room from which he has never emerged. He will be the foremost, certainly, but not the most fortunate of men. The history of Italy is a long lesson in the supreme desirability of being human. For, when Frederick Hohenstauffen kissed these steps, it was not the Papal Father he sought to win by this blandishment. It was that most human of women, Italy. Consider the enormities of her historical behaviour. Every law of this behaviour has been violated so often by her that we can see it is not the law that she loves but the creature that this law should govern and fortify. The Sienese bless their racehorses in chapels because they are very familiar with Almighty God. Where is your son?'

O Venice, inhabited by so many memories and so many incommunicable nostalgias, where is there room, not to remember, but to forget?

I move about this city in a dream of dirty grandeur: there are gold-breasted harps on the street corners, with whom it is possible to conduct stimulating and even edifying conversations: it will not surprise you to learn that these gold breasted harps are disguised as youths in rags. I found such conversations edifying only because, to a person in my state of intoxication, almost any remark by the young and beautiful would seem to be edyifing. Here the expatriate millionaires groan in their palaces to see the beggar boys kissing in the arcades, the sailors stroll about proudly because here they are really at sea, and the cats commit suicide in the canals because they cannot learn to love water. I saw an American film-star buzzing by in a motor boat. He had on his face an expression of fear and incomprehension, for he recognised round him a glittering illusion in which the street urchin held a dynastic place, but he had none.

Reality! I have seen Marxian economists who would disappear in a cloud of knowing like a Cheshire cat if faced with the daydreams and the nocturnal hallucinations that eddy up out of the Grand Canal on a Saturday evening. The real things are simply whatever is and whatever happens. The mirage is no less real because it cannot be lived in by a meat magnate from Chicago: the desire is no less real than the satisfaction. When these mansions and palaces, perpetually re-enacting the tragedies and the comedies that tenant them, when they are demolished or destroyed, where will the comedies and the tragedies find a place in which to rest? That guide is a liar who announces that the Ducal Palace is now empty. In every florid chamber sit those invisible events that perpetuate the greatest human passions, more persistent here, I believe, because burdened with greater responsibilities. Venice invented the vices of civilisation.

As I stood spellbound by the tremendous pronouncements of the great bells of the Basilica, I saw a group of visitors in bright new clothes being formed, under the direction of an assistant, into a collective photograph in front of St. Mark. The photographer stooped with his head in black velvet. The assistant arranged his customers in layers. And about it all, swirling ceaselessly between the lens and the victims, the pigeons, like practical jokers, span and circled. The ladies held up their hands to the birds. They declined to alight. The photographer emerged from his black velvet, took a packet of birdseed from his pocket, and handed it to his assistant. The assistant, like a schoolmistress distributing sweets, poured a small quantity into each person's hand. The pigeons, multiplied now to a flickering arithmetic of wings, fought wildly to devour the seed. The little group of visitors became gradually transformed into a public monument. I saw a human being constructed of pigeons.

NEL MEZZO DEL CAMMIN

ANTHONY BERTRAM

WHEN I was half a hundred, which should be more than midway—Dante, it seems, was only thirty-five—I also found myself in an obscure wood. (It is no impertinence to say so. There was also a fool in the forest of Arden.) But I had not lost the path because the wood was dark and tangled with undergrowth, but because it was a beech wood where there was no undergrowth, and where everywhere and nowhere there seemed to be a path. When I realised that I had no direction, I stopped to listen; but there was nothing to listen to. It was not silence but only a void. Everything had been emptied out: everything was negative. There was no bird-song, no wind above, no rustle in the dead leaves below, no cracking of twigs. There was no throb of tractor or aeroplane or thresher in the distant air: no axe or human voice to make the world comfortable. All this was an alarming absence; and the wood darkened. Everything had crept away from me and I was alone.

I stood like that for some time, which was measured by the beats of my uneasy pulse: for there *was* time because there was not silence. Then I turned to my right, under a compulsion that was not a call, and saw that a barrier of yew closed the distance that way. That way seemed the least probable way out, but that was the way I felt the compulsion to take. I moved and broke the absence of sound, setting up a crepitation among the leaves that was like a firing-squad, like many firing-squads that were kept busy. The way was easy among the smooth grey trunks until I came to the barrier and saw that was spattered with berries. I had seen that before: one wall of a house left standing with a dark green wallpaper and the dead civilian slumped at the foot of it. But there was a way round that; here there was not. The unpleasantness had to be gone through. I covered my eyes and forced my way, and when I found that my body was no longer scourged by the branches, I uncovered them.

Certainly, I thought, I have found my way somewhere. There is certainly something here.

It was a clearing that seemed a perfect circle, walled without break by the yew. It was covered with short grass that showed no sign of the brown coarseness of the season, but was as fresh a green as if it were spring and not long past midway of the year. But that was easily accounted for, for I saw at once in the middle was a round pond, full to the brim with pale gold water. This pond was absolutely still, a polished reflector; but I could not see where it found that gold to reflect, because, when I looked up at the sky, I saw that it was colourless, a mere transparency. There was, in fact, no sky. This clearing stood immediately below a funnel made in the sky by the rotating world outside, like a telescope pointed at nothing.

Of course, I thought, nothing is also infinity. There's no knowing what the pond may find to reflect. And it's the pond of course, I thought, which matters. The pond is the eye.

I listened again, and I recognised at once that now indeed there *was* silence. That was what there was here: the whole of silence, a positive and supremely beneficent presence. And all the sounds that had *not* been in the wood outside were present here, but frozen. The song of the bird was a timeless and soundless music that did not exist outside the crystal of the silence, but there in the crystal it was the same as the thud of the axe and the rustling leaves, the same as a crepitation and the spattering of drops.

For a time I stood quite still in this bright and reconciling silence . . . But what nonsense am I writing? Clearly there is no time in silence because there is no

beat to measure it by. The mere thought of the thunderous drumming of my pulse was quite out of place. This was silence . . .

This was the silence that I had held once before in my cupped hands, fearful of spilling it and hopelessly fearful. That had been in Rome, which I read only the other day in the paper is the noisiest city in the world. Or was it Europe? Never mind. It probably isn't true anyhow. I had left the tourists and the insistent ruins and the blaze of all the splendours, and passed into a cool and narrow street that did not go in any other direction that I wanted. There was a small church, dark and nameless and empty. Inside was silence. In the middle of the silence was a crude little wooden Virgin, decked out in stiff and weighty embroidered vestments, crowned, sceptred and alone. The gilt was tarnished and the flowers were dead, but before her was a bank of candles whose pale gold flames burnt without a flicker. Their light filled the silence and outside it was nothing but the traffic roundabout. She stood before a pillar of yellow marble that went up out into the dark, as it rose from the dark. All round her were hung the *ex votos* that embalmed the memory of miracles and faiths, and were the echoes left on the silence after the last echo of human life had died away from the ear.

There I had stood, afraid even to bow my head for fear of upsetting that precious bowl. And then suddenly all the candle flames bent with a sharp crack. It was over. And then the dim poor church was filled with the appalling tumults of the leather curtain that crashed back by the door and the shuffling of the old man in carpet-slippers.

And so now, as I remembered this—this memory of noise which silence will not tolerate, for although silence is certainly not the mere absence of sound, it is as certainly not its presence either—as I remembered this and broke my contemplation, the pale gold pond turned grey and was haggard with wrinkles. The sky filled and closed down, and I noticed for the first time that the funereal yews on this side also were spattered with the garish and terrible berries. I had again lost the way of silence, but still there was no sound.

Well, that was my fault. Now there was the problem of how to get back into the traffic, which is better than nothing.

MISS CHARLOTTE

MORRIS COX

Miss Charlotte,
from motives of pure affection,
feared to be loved:

tied a little bonnet-string,
with uncontrollable sorrow,
over the thin, spare form of her man:

found a casket of diamonds
preserved from the wreck,
impossible to see without tears,

and suffered the solitude of widowhood
at the church door,
shaded by a cap.

El Aleijadinho

THE LITTLE CRIPPLE

J. B. BURY

In the Cathedral of Cuzco in Peru there is a series of seventeenth-century paintings representing the months of the year. They are unusual of their period because the subject is not religious, and they have consequently attracted a good deal of attention. Expert opinion unhesitatingly assigned them a Flemish origin. The treatment of the landscape, and the characteristic blues and greens employed, fully confirmed this attribution, until, quite recently, a signature was discovered which reads 'Ttito Quispe, 1631'. In the Dominican establishment at Cuzco the same Indian name appears on a painting of purely Italianate style. The Indian artist's ambition, that his work should be indistinguishable from European productions, had been achieved; and we obtain a fascinating glimpse of native psychology in colonial Peru three hundred years ago.

Turning from seventeenth-century Peru to twentieth-century Mexico, six magnificently illustrated folio volumes, *Iglesias de México*, were published in Mexico City between 1924 and 1927. They mark an important step forward in the recent rediscovery by Mexicans of their colonial heritage in art and architecture. The principal author of *Iglesias de México*, responsible not only for most of the text but also for a number of fine pictures reproduced in colour, signs himself 'Dr. Atl'. In 1922 there appeared two important folio volumes, *Las Artes Populares en México*, also written and illustrated by Dr. Atl. Besides his pioneer work as a publicist, Atl early played a prominent rôle in the modern artistic movement associated with such great names as Diego Rivera and José Clemente Orozco. He has specialised in Popocatapetl, to whose 18,000-foot peak he has climbed more than a hundred times, and whose many moods he has interpreted both in lyric poems and in paintings notable for their sense of colour. From his Aztec name (*atl* = water) it might be thought that the artist was of Indian descent, but in fact 'Dr. Atl' is the pseudonym adopted by Gerardo Murillo, a Mexican of Spanish stock, who has no Indian blood in his veins.

Ttito Quispe, the Indian who completely renounced the artistic tradition of his

Inca forbears in favour of that of Europe, and Gerardo Murillo, the Spanish Mexican whose devotion to the native artistic traditions of his country is symbolised by his adoption of the Aztec name Atl, epitomise the complete reversal in artistic point of view which has occurred in Latin America since colonial days. What is interesting is the long predominance of the Ttito Quispe point of view. The vigorously original architectural developments of the eighteenth century were of brief duration, and throughout the nineteenth century Latin American art continued to be almost completely dependent upon, and imitative of, European styles. The change in attitude dates from as recently as a generation ago, and Dr. Atl was in fact a pioneer.

Dr. Atl is also important as a figure who links the rediscovery of the national artistic heritage, Indian and Colonial, with the modern artistic movements which have closely accompanied it. In Brazil, the other Latin American republic which has made the most notable contribution to twentieth-century art, the same close parallel may be observed between serious study of the national heritage and modern artistic movements led by such world-famous figures as the painter Candido Portinari and the architect Oscar Niemeyer. In Mexico these developments date from the 1920s; in Brazil from a decade later. Moreover, the Mexicans have mainly expressed themselves in painting, whereas the Brazilians have turned their creative energies first and foremost to architecture; and, in Dr. Lúcio Costa, Brazil is fortunate in possessing one of the great versatile figures of our times, who is both the most influential of the progressive architects and the foremost authority on the seventeenth- and eighteenth-century monuments of his country. Mexican, and Peruvian, colonial achievement is now well recognised outside Latin America, thanks to the admirably-illustrated studies recently published in Spain and the United States.[1] The fine buildings of eighteenth-century Brazil, on the other hand, still await general recognition and the outstanding Brazilian artist of the age shares this obscurity.

George Borrow, little heeded in his own day, introduced El Greco, 'a most extraordinary genius', to English readers in *The Bible in Spain* (1843). Another famous Victorian author, Sir Richard Burton, was the first traveller to record the name of the remarkable Brazilian colonial artist who has only recently been rediscovered in his own country, and still remains almost unknown outside it. Travelling through the province of Minas Gerais in the highland interior of Brazil during 1867, Burton visited Sao Joao d'El Rei, a town which had formerly been one of the richest centres of colonial gold mining. There he was taken to see the late eighteenth-century Franciscan church, and told that the highly sculptured façade was 'the handicraft of a handless man generally known as the Aleijadinho or Little Cripple'. Inquiring further, Burton learned that the sculptor had worked 'with tools adjusted by an assistant to the stumps which represented arms.'

Antônio Francisco Lisbôa (1738–1814), more generally known by his nickname *O Aleijadinho*[2] (the Little Cripple), was born at Ouro Preto, the capital of colonial Minas Gerais. Tradition relates that his father was a Portuguese carpenter and his mother a negress slave. Native of an interior province which had been discovered and founded by Brazilian (not Portuguese) explorers, and characteristically Brazilian in his mixed Portuguese and African blood, he is justifiably claimed by his countrymen as a truly 'national' figure. Very little is known of his life. He was, we are told, a small misshapen mulatto whose later years were haunted by the attacks of a mysterious mutilating disease which crippled him so that he could not walk, caused his fingers to wither and attacked his face so that he became a repulsive and loathsome sight. Conscious of the horror which his appearance inspired, he developed a morbid fear of being seen, going to extraordinary lengths to avoid observation. But, hidden by screens, he continued to work indefatigably, his favourite slave Maurício attaching chisel and mallet to the master's paralysed hands. When he was nearly sixty he undertook the commission of carving sixty-four life-sized wooden images and twelve gigantic stone statues for the

[1] In particular Professor Diego Angulo Iñiguez, *Historia del Arte Hispano-Americano*, Barcelona, 1945 onwards; Professor George Kubler, *Mexican Architecture of the Sixteenth Century*, New Haven 1948; Professor Harold Wethey, *Colonial Architecture and Sculpture in Peru*, Cambridge, Mass. 1949. [2] The most recent of the infrequent mentions of this name outside Brazil corrupts it to 'Aley Jadinho' (*United Nations World*, October 1950, p. 36)

pilgrimage church at Congonhas do Campo, a village between Sao Joao d'El Rei and Ouro Preto. This task took him ten years to complete. The Congonhas figures are very uneven in quality, as if reflecting the irregular progress of the sculptor's terrible disease, but they include what are perhaps the most dramatic works of art in South America.

The Aleijadinho's achievement in the face of his severe handicaps has a special personal significance for Brazilians. The struggle to maintain a modern civilisation in the tropics, the creation of which has been an unique historical event, calls for inexhaustible energy and a refusal to admit defeat in spite of constant discouragements. In this sense the Aleijadinho's life is regarded as a symbolic example for his countrymen. In addition, as an artist who developed an original style as opposed to the provincial imitation of European precedents, the Aleijadinho becomes a figure of importance not only for Brazil, but for the Americas as a whole. He may indeed be regarded as the pioneer who has most forcefully, most impressively and most decisively expressed in his art the emancipation of the New World from the Old.

The province of Minas Gerais, scene of the Aleijadinho's monumental labours, is one of the richest mineral regions in the world. Its precious stones rival those of Ceylon and among other immense metallic resources it contains whole mountains of solid iron ore. As early as the middle of the sixteenth century, Portuguese explorers had ascended the Rio Jequitinhonha to its headwaters in the Serra do Espinhaço, penetrated this formidable range against the opposition of hostile Indians and reached the basin of the Rio São Francisco where they found beautiful green stones, thought to be emeralds but subsequently proved to be tourmalines. To this period belongs the legend of a range of mountains glittering with precious metals, the Serra do Sabarabussú—a legend which for the early prospectors in central Brazil came to possess the same lure as had the Land of the Omaguas, Lake Parima and the fabulous city of Manoa d'El Dorado for Sir Walter Raleigh and the other adventurers who sailed up the Orinoco and the Orellana. The disappointments of successive expensive failures in the latter half of the sixteenth century discouraged further attempts to discover the silver and emeralds believed to exist in the interior of Brazil, and it was not until the 1660s that the search was resumed in a last desperate hope that here might lie the remedy for the bankrupt economy of Portugal, ruined by forty years of war with Holland and Spain. The Crown could no longer bear the expense involved and therefore entrusted the task to local Brazilian prospectors, the colonists of São Paulo, a small Creole community so long cut off from Portugal that they spoke the Guaraní language in preference to Portuguese. In their little wooden churches there are carvings, evidently the work of Indian or *mestizo* artisans copying Portuguese baroque altars, which are curiously reminiscent of Romanesque reliefs in their flat primitive style.

When D. Afonso VI of Braganza wrote to the Paulistas to enlist their aid, he could not have chosen men better suited for the proposed explorations. Since 1603, when the *bandeira*, or expedition in search of Indian slaves, commanded by Nicolau Barreto, penetrated to Potosí in the Spanish *Virreinato* of Peru, Paulista adventurers had explored the enormous *sertões*, or backlands, of the Continent, warring with Jesuit missionaries for mastery of the interior tribes. In 1641 a *bandeira* was defeated at the confluence of the Embororé and Uruguay rivers, seven hundred miles from São Paulo, in a three-day battle where cannon improvised by the Jesuits from the stems of the giant Iguassú bamboo decided the engagement. Thereafter the Paulistas found their slaving expeditions increasingly unprofitable and when the royal letters were received, they readily responded, turning from the hunting down of Indians to the search for the elusive mines of emeralds and silver. The greatest *bandeirante* of the age, Fernão Dias, self-styled *Governador das Esmeraldas* and head of the distinguished Paes Leme family, spent seven years (1674–81) exploring the Espinhaço range. He died on his return journey, having found only semi-precious stones, but his heroic expedition marked out the route for subsequent prospectors,

who eventually, in the last decade of the seventeenth century, found deposits of gold larger than any hitherto discovered in the world. The identity of the first discoverer is uncertain, but tradition indicates the names of the guide Bartholomeu Bueno de Siqueira, known to the Indian tribes as the *Anhanguera*, or Fire Devil, and Garcia Rodrigues Paes Leme, a son of Fernão Dias who was subsequently appointed hereditary Grand Warden, or *Guarda-Mor Geral das Minas do Ouro.*

The pattern of the mining settlements, sited in three main groups on the banks of the principal gold-bearing streams, corresponded to the threefold character of the auriferous watershed. The pioneer encampments quickly grew into considerable towns, each of which developed its own special individuality. The focus of the northern settlements, Sabará, was founded on the Rio das Velhas, tributary of the Rio São Francisco, by a son-in-law of Fernão Dias, but was thereafter largely settled by immigrants from Bahia and Pernambuco. Among the many fine colonial buildings at Sabará are the chapel of Nossa Senhora do 'O'[1], decorated with Chinese-style painted panels, and the monumental church of N.S. do Carmo. Comte Francis de Castelnau, who visited Sabará in 1843, drew attention to the latter church, observing that *le portail est orné aux parties extérieures et supérieures d'une sculpture assez bien executée par un manchot.* The decoration of N.S. do Carmo at Sabará was one of the earliest works, undertaken by the indefatigable Aleijadinho, to whose legendary reputation Castelnau adds further confusion by describing him as one-armed. The decorated rococo style of the later eighteenth-century Mineiro churches, which is so personally associated with the crippled sculptor that it has come to be called the *Estilo Aleijadinho*, may be seen to still better advantage at São João d'El Rei, the central town of the southern group of mines. São João d'El Rei, on the Rio dos Mortes, a remote tributary of the River Plate which flows into the Atlantic 2,000 miles away to the south-west, was founded by the *bandeirante* João de Siqueira Afonso and it preserved throughout the goldmining age a predominantly Paulista character. It contains two great *Estilo Aleijadinho* monuments, the church of N.S. do Carmo and the even more splendid church of São Francisco de Assis, the façade of which so much impressed Sir Richard Burton.

The third and most important concentration of mines was those situated among the headwater tributaries of the eastward-flowing Rio Doce, exploiting the neighbouring mountain streams of the Serra de Ouro Preto. Here a *bandeirante* Colonel founded the settlement on the Ribeirão do Carmo, which in 1745 was raised to the status of city and seat of the bishopric of Mariana; while five miles upstream another pioneer, the Paulista Antônio Dias de Oliveira, began extracting gold in 1698 on the site of what became the town of Vila Rica de Ouro Preto, seat of government of the Province, subsequently State, of Minas Gerais.It had over 30,000 inhabitants in the eighteenth century, having since declined to little more than a quarter that number. In architecture and sculpture, Ouro Preto, as it is now called, was the centre of the development of the *Estilo Aleijadinho.*

For the traveller who crosses the tangled mountains of Minas Gerais to visit the ghost towns set in these remote stony landscapes, it seems in keeping with the scene that the principal sculptor who decorated the churches of the region should have been a fantastic figure of legend, a cripple said to have lost the use of his extremities and worked with chisel and mallet strapped to his paralysed hands. The present-day inhabitants of Minas Gerais live much in the past, so the Aleijadinho is still for them a very real figure. Thus the historian Dr. Salomão de Vasconcellos, while at Morro Grande near Sabará about twelve years ago, collected from an old man, whose grandfather had known the Aleijadinho personally, various fragmentary recollections which had been handed down in the family. The sculptor, referred to throughout out by his Christian names Antônio Francisco, had, it seems, spent some considerable time in Morro Grande working on the decoration of the parish church. He was, related the old man, a corpulent mulatto who always had two negroes in

[1] The dedication is to the Virgin Mary in expectation of the birth of Christ, the 'O' being the exclamation with which the anthems of the vigil of the Nativity begin

Church of 'Bom Jesus', Congonhas

Forecourt of 'Bom Jesus' *The Prophet Daniel*

Below: *Hosea*

Detail: The Prophet Daniel

Detail: The Prophet Hezekiel

The Prophet Joel

attendance to help him with such tasks as moving the blocks of stone on which he was working. He wore a cloth on his head when out of doors, preferring if possible to work inside the church so that he could avoid the sun. On one occasion after a dispute about wages with the administration, all the workmen employed on the building ran away, including Antônio Francisco, who was, however, apprehended at the nearby town of Caeté and brought back to complete his contract.

The Aleijadinho died in 1814, by which time the surface gold of Minas Gerais had been nearly exhausted, and today only the splendid gold towns—depopulated, isolated and difficult of access, scarcely altered since the early nineteenth century—remain to bear witness to former prosperity. Their landscape settings are magnificent. Approaching Ouro Preto from the south-west, the road crosses a high saddle, the Alto do Morro. The views from this eminence are well described by an early nineteenth-century English visitor in language which recalls the water-colour art of the period in its pictorial style:

> 'The elevation of this spot,' writes John Luccock, 'we estimated at one thousand and fifty feet above the level which we had left in the morning. The atmosphere, too, was singularly transparent, though dotted with light fleecy clouds; this gave us a wide command of the country, to such a distance as the eye seldom penetrates, and rendered objects remarkably distinct. To the South-West the detached Morro of St. Jozé was minutely visible, though more than sixty miles from us in a right line. Far beyond it, forming a broader angle, the horizon was dimly discovered, and appeared much like that of the ocean. The undulations of the intermediate plain, great and bold when among them, but now apparently diminished and dwindled, added greatly to the beauty of the view by the variety of light and shade which they occasioned. Towards the East and South-East the mountains were near and woody, that on which we stood declining with a long gradual slope. Westward, in a line with its brow, rose other Serros, lofty and distant, while those to the North presented themselves with great grandeur in dark and heavy masses, the grey point of Itacolumí towering above them all.'

Ouro Preto lies right below Itacolumí, a strange-shaped peak capped by two gigantic pinnacles of black iron slate. Once used as a landmark by the Paulista *bandeiras*, it dominates the town from the south-east, providing a fantastic background. The present *cidade* of Ouro Preto, formerly the town of Vila Rica, where the Aleijadinho was probably born, lived most of his life, and died, stands on the north slope of the deep stony valley of the Ribeirão do Carmo. Thirteen baroque churches crown the hills and ridges which intersect the site. The steep streets are paved with iron slate and granite, and six massive eighteenth-century bridges give access across the Ribeirao and its tributary brooks. Among close-packed groups of colonial houses and tropical gardens well supplied with clumps of bananas and occasional palms, there stand several private palaces built by great eighteenth-century gold miners and government officials. Sixteen monumental *chafarizes*, or fountains, bearing Latin inscriptions, provide the town with copious water—the water being purer, Sir Richard Burton observed, than the Latin. On the north side of the Morro de Santa Quiteria, a spur which roughly bisects the town, stands the fortified Palace of the Governors, facing, across a broad *praça* to the huge fortress-like prison, the ornate façade of which is reminiscent of the Capitol at Rome. To the east of the Morro de Santa Quiteria lies the parish of N.S. da Conceição of Antônio Dias, the original Paulista settlement; to the west the invocation is that of N.S. do Pilar, the parish of the immigrant Portuguese community. The imposing public buildings on the central spur symbolise the authority which overawed and thus held together the separate, for long actually hostile, communities in eighteenth-century Vila Rica. The town has retained to this day certain traces of the old division between the two parishes, which was at root an antagonism of ideas and way of life. The Portuguese immigrants of Ouro Preto were conservative in outlook and tended to be intolerant,

calling the Paulistas *Caboclos* in contemptuous reference to their partly Indian blood and simple manners; while the latter nicknamed their supplanters *Emboabas*, or feathered legs, a complicated insult referring to their style of dress. The final defeat of *Caboclos* in their unequal struggle against the *Emboabas* was symbolised in Vila Rica by a *festa* of unparalleled magnificence, known as the *Triunfo Eucaristico*, which took place in 1733. The central feature of this *festa* was a procession of symbolic figures, sacred and profane, including the four winds and the seven principal heavenly bodies, represented as Roman gods and goddesses, literally covered with gold and precious stones. The pretext for the procession, and for subsequent feasts and firework displays, was the transfer of the Holy Sacrament to the newly-built parish church of N.S. do Pilar, which in this dramatic manner proclaimed and confirmed its supremacy over the rival parish church of Antônio Dias, whose inauguration received no such extravagant recognition—thus demonstrating the irrevocable subordination of the Paulista to the Portuguese community.

The Aleijadinho belonged, like his immigrant father before him, to Antônio Dias, and was buried in its parish church. The *Triunfo Eucaristico* had occurred five years before he was born, and by his middle years the old *Caboclo-Emboaba* hostility had been almost forgotten—superseded by the new and more formidable threat to Portuguese authority represented by the *Inconfidencia Mineira*, the conspiracy of 1789. Likewise the earlier ecclesiastical rivalry between the two parish churches was overlaid in the later eighteenth century by the large-scale church-building activity of the *Irmandades*, brotherhoods of laymen enrolled under the protection of a patron saint or of the Virgin Mary. Outstanding for their building enterprise from the 1760s onwards were the brotherhoods of the Third Order of N. S. do Carmo and of São Francisco de Assis. Their churches at Ouro Preto, Mariana, Sabará and São João d'El Rei, which rival in importance the great parish churches themselves, were all built contemporaneously, belonging to the generation of the *Inconfidentes* with whom the church of São Francisco de Assis at Ouro Preto is especially associated. These Third Order Carmelite and Franciscan churches were also the principal monuments of the new *Estilo Aleijadinho*, which may be said to have represented an artistic revolution in the colony, contradicting in almost every respect the Mannerist architecture of Portuguese derivation, which had hitherto held undisputed sway.

It is natural to compare the artistic revolution successfully accomplished by the Aleijadinho in the 1770s and 1780s with the political revolution unsuccessfully projected by the *Inconfidentes* of 1789. But although the Aleijadinho belonged to the same generation as the Conspirators, and although he may be said to have devoted himself in his own artistic field to the emancipation of his native land from Portugal, he was separated from these contemporaries of his by the great gulf of his mixed blood. One of the most ardent of the *Inconfidentes*, Colonel Ignacio José de Alvarenga Peixoto, did indeed suggest that they should proclaim liberty for the *mestizo* and mulatto slaves, an insignificant element in the slave community; but even this small concession was regarded by his fellow-conspirators as rash and dangerous. The mulattos of Minas Gerais, a numerous and increasing element in the population, were looked upon with suspicion by the white upper class. If not slaves, their status was servile; if technically free, their liberty was largely an empty gift. They therefore played no part in the Conspiracy of 1789, which indeed meant little more to them than an attempt to change the ruling class from Portuguese whites to Creole whites. Mulatto sympathies were likely to lie with the slaves rather than with the masters. Apart from their *Irmandades*, which provided a religious outlet for their frustrated energies, the mulattos had no social institution capable of giving its members support and self-confidence. Thus, although they were a potentially revolutionary element in Minas Gerais, they lacked the cohesion which enabled the mulatto community in contemporary Haiti, for example, to play an active insurrectionary rôle.

The limitation of opportunity, from

which the Aleijadinho suffered owing to his inferior social status as a mulatto, imposed upon him a handicap which further emphasises the *tour de force* of his achievement. Each of the distinguished travellers who visited Minas Gerais during the nineteenth century was struck by one or other aspect of this *tour de force*. 'In the manner of his sculpture,' wrote Auguste de Saint Hilaire, 'there is a certain air of grandeur which indicates a most pronounced natural talent in this artist who never travelled and had no examples to instruct him.' This paradox and the isolation of his work —he had no comparable predecessors or successors in Minas Gerais—give the origins of artistic eminence a special interest. The Aleijadinho's nineteenth-century biographer Roderigo Bretas tells us only that:

> 'The knowledge he had of design, in architecture and sculpture, was obtained from the practical school of his father, and perhaps too from that of the draughtsman and painter João Gomes Baptista who was employed as engraver of coins in the Mint at Ouro Preto.'

João Gomes Baptista and Manoel Francisco Lisboa were men of very different calibre. The latter was a carpenter, subsequently also a stone-mason, who ended his career as a master builder; but he was always, and essentially, an artisan. The former, in contrast, was a skilled craftsman in metals, trained in one of the best schools of Western Europe, the Mint of Lisbon, through which he would have been subject to the artistic influence of the international society of artists and craftsmen gathered there under the patronage of D. João V. But whatever may be attributed to João Gomes, and to Manoel Francisco, it has been generally felt that their influence is inadequate to account for certain aspects of their pupil's work. Strenuous efforts have therefore been made to discover another master from whom he could have learned, and various names have been put forward; but so far all have been found unacceptable. One critic has given up the task, declaring in desperation that the Aleijadinho is a myth. The probable answer is that João Gomes Baptista was effectively his only master in design, but that he acquired much additional information, and above all ideas, from literary sources such as engravings and illustrated books.

At all events his work has a variety which is sometimes disconcerting, and which adds further point to Saint Hilaire's paradox of the sculptor 'who had never travelled and had no examples to instruct him.' Superimposed on a basic rococo style, he employed designs which have been traced to Byzantine, Gothic, Renaissance and even Oriental sources. If the variety of his work emphasises Saint Hilaire's paradox, Burton's paradox of the 'handiwork, Hibernicè, of a handless man' is underlined by the volume of his output. Burton found 'the labours of the ubiquitous Aleijadinho scattered throughout the province of Minas Gerais', but in Burton's day the Little Cripple was piously credited with much that was not his. The nineteenth-century written references record seventeen churches and chapels in which his work was said to be found. This list was based on tradition and hearsay, but that which can be proved to be his by evidence of church documents remains enormous, even allowing for help he had from slaves and apprentices. The psychological explanation is that, cut off from normal social life, he sublimated all his considerable energies into a passionate single-minded devotion to his art. His most important work was done for three churches—São Francisco de Assis, Ouro Preto (façade and interior), São Francisco de Assis, São João d'El Rei (façade), and the Sanctuary Church, Congonhas do Campo (images for the Via Crucis chapels and statues in the forecourt). Next in importance is his work at the churches of N.S. do Carmo at Ouro Preto (façade and interior), N. S. do Carmo at Sabará (façade and interior) and N.S. do Carmo at São João d'El Rei (façade). The long list of other work, either proved to be his or attributed to him, though large in volume, is relatively minor in artistic importance compared with that at the foregoing six churches.

There remains the problem of the extent of his personal participation in the sculpture and carving known or generally agreed to have been designed by him. He

is known to have employed assistants; his slave Maurício was one. To what extent did he make use of their services? No certain answer can be given, but since it is clear that he took a personal hand in executing his major conceptions at Ouro Preto, Congonhas and Sabará—if not at São João d'El Rei as well, and since the designs and the creative impetus throughout were his, it is not material to his final reputation as an artist if the execution of some part of his work is attributed to his assistants.

The Aleijadinho was an *entalhador* or decorative sculptor employed in the carving of figures and ornament for the façades and for the interiors of churches. He worked in wood and stone. On the façades of his churches the sculpture was so integral a part of the architectural design that he has some claim to the title of architect as well as sculptor. This dual status appears to have been recognised in his own day, though formal distinctions between the rôles of stone-mason, architect and sculptor were, it would seem, less precise than they have since become. An estimate of the importance of his work cannot therefore be limited to his sculpture and carving. It must include the whole style of decorated architecture which prevailed briefly in the main urban centres of Minas Gerais during the last decades of the eighteenth and the first years of the nineteenth century.

Brazil's cultural emancipation from Portugal in the latter half of the eighteenth century, together with its necessary corollary, the development of a Brazilian national character, was closely associated with mulatto priests, preachers and missionaries, painters, musicians and sculptors. Their genius for music and the plastic arts they inherited from their African side; they did not compete with their Portuguese contemporaries in literature. The Aleijadinho is the classic instance of the mulatto whose immensely energetic and potentially mutinous intelligence was sublimated in religious art. The traditional stories related about him by Rodrigo Brêtas are almost more true than truth as commentaries on the mulatto temperament, particularly those concerned with his contradictory behaviour towards his slaves. Thus he wrote letters, we are told, granting them their freedom, but kept the letters locked up in a box; and in the end they were never liberated. The most striking of all Brêtas' tales, however, are those which refer to the hostile and resentful manner in which he treated the Portuguese *fidalgos* with whom he had some slight contact. These anecdotes refer to the period 1797 to 1803 when Minas Gerais was governed by General D. Bernardo José de Lorena, subsequently created Conde de Sarzedas and appointed Viceroy of Portuguese India.

It is these legendary but symbolic stories which in particular lend colour to the interpretation of the Aleijadinho's later work as an expression of social protest and of a longing for independence from a domineering and brutal slave-owning class. Thus at Congonhas do Campo the portrayal of the Prophet Isaiah could be thought to reflect an unconscious identification of the sculptor with his subject, a desire to associate himself with this formidable Old Testament figure who denounced the self-same abuses and corruption which infected the society in which the Aleijadinho himself lived. His emotional ambivalence may also have led him to identify himself with his melancholy and noble figures of Our Lord submitting to the sufferings of the Via Crucis, with his weeping Mary Magdalen and even in two exceptionally expressive figures, with the pensive, remorseful Judas of the Last Supper[1] and the defiant but curiously tragic Bad Thief of the Crucifixion. The Roman soldiers in the Via Crucis groups are represented with grossly caricatured Roman noses which give them an inhuman, almost devilish, appearance. 'Surely,' asks Burton rhetorically, 'such Roman-nosed warriors never could have existed unless they used their proboscis as the elephant uses its trunk.' It has been suggested that the Aleijadinho's intention, which may even have been known to some of his contemporaries, was here to satirize and symbolically to express his hatred of the arrogant dragoons who acted as police in the gold-mining Province, and were

[1] See illustration on cover. It is the custom of pilgrims to slap the face of this statue of Judas, and the marks of their hands can clearly be seen—*Ed.*

guilty of much brutality. This interpretation of the Congonhas figures is both attractive and plausible, and the Aleijadinho can thus be regarded as the forerunner of Orozco and Portinari, in whose work social criticism has been particularly prominent and expressive. But it is only to a part of the Aleijadinho's work that this interpretation can fairly be applied. In the Via Crucis figures there is certainly reason to suspect a social message, but in the statues of the Prophets he seems to have become so deeply interested in their personalities through his study of the Prophetic Books that this was his overriding preoccupation throughout, any social implications being secondary and recessive. The Congonhas Prophets were sculptured in stone, whereas the Via Crucis images and an imposing figure of St. George at Ouro Preto were carved in wood. Generally speaking, the Aleijadinho's work in wood is more expressionist, more prone to sarcasm and caricature, and as such more clearly intended as social criticism. In contrast, his work in stone is more noble and profound, as if he adapted his treatment to the different natures of his materials.

The masterpieces of the Aleijadinho's art possess a spirit which is removed beyond local and topical limitations. The breadth of his interests and a curiously impersonal approach are revealed in his portrayal of racial types. The impersonal outlook is shown by his never having represented a negro or mulatto in his sculpture. This is all the more remarkable since two of his friends, his step-brother Padre Felix Antônio, and his mulatto colleague Manoel da Costa Ataíde, both repeatedly did so. The former carved images of African saints, such as Santo Antônio Negro de Catalgerona and São Benedito the Moor of Palermo, in the church of N. S. do Rosário at Ouro Preto, while the latter, a painter of great charm and interest, decorated the ceiling of the chancel of São Francisco de Assis at Ouro Preto with mulatto cherubs' heads. If he eschewed the negro, the Aleijadinho showed extraordinary interest in other racial types. His St. George, said to have been the likeness of an arrogant *fidalgo* (Colonel José Romão), is a fine portrayal of a traditional physiognomy still to be found for example in the Azores. At Congonhas do Campo, leaving aside the Roman noses which scandalised Burton, there are among the Prophets a series of masterly studies of Oriental features, Jewish, Arab and Mongolian. In this, as in so many other aspects of his work, the Aleijadinho transcends, by the astonishingly wide range of his imagination, the limitations of his country and his age. It may be thought that the broad and varied interests displayed in the Aleijadinho's art have a symbolic significance for the Portuguese Empire which could still, in the eighteenth century, claim to embrace the world from the coasts of China and India to the confines of Africa and Brazil, with Indonesian and Atlantic Islands among the intervening oceans. The days when the great Albuquerque with every hope of success had planned the seizure of Mecca, in order to hold the body of the Prophet in ransom for Jerusalem, were long past, and Portuguese supremacy in the Oriental seas had long since been overthrown, but the only European nation to have successfully established a city on the mainland of China continued to exercise a major influence in South and East Asia through the three hundred missions which they still maintained scattered throughout the Indian peninsula and archipelago. The wealth of eighteenth-century Minas Gerais supported the limitless aspirations of the Crown of Portugal and gave strength to the whole Lusitanian world. It was with gold from the mountain streams of the Serra do Espinhaço that D. João V. reconquered the hinterland of Gôa from the Maratha princes and secured the goodwill of the Celestial ruler by such costly gestures as the embassy of D. Alexandre Metelo de Sousa e Meneses to the Emperor Yung Chêng. The gold towns in the *sertão* of Minas can thus be regarded as the economic centres of a decayed but still imposing maritime empire of enormous extent, and it is in this perspective perhaps that the scope of the Aleijadinho's art should be viewed.

MORE ABOUT BLAISE CENDRARS

HENRY MILLER

I HAVE long pondered over Cendrars' confessed insomnia. He attributes it to his life in the trenches, if I remember rightly. True enough, no doubt, but I surmise there are deeper reasons for it. At any rate, what I wish to point out is that there seems to be a connection between this fecundity and his sleeplessness. For the ordinary individual sleep is *the* restorative. Exceptional individuals—holy men, gurus, inventors, leaders, men of affairs, or certain types of the insane—are able to do with very little sleep. They apparently have other means of replenishing their dynamic potential. Some men, merely by varying their pursuits, can go on working with almost no sleep. Others, like the yogi and the guru, in becoming more and more aware and therefore more alive, virtually emancipate themselves from the thrall of sleep. (Why sleep if the purpose of life is to enjoy creation to the fullest?) With Cendrars, I have the feeling that in switching from active life to writing, and vice versa, he replenishes himself. A pure supposition on my part. Otherwise I am at a loss to account for a man burning the candle at both ends and not consuming himself. Cendrars mentions somewhere that he is of a line of long-lived antecedents. He has certainly squandered his hereditary patrimony regally. *But*—he shows no signs of cracking up. Indeed, he seems to have entered upon a period of second youth. He is confident that when he reaches the ripe age of seventy, he will be ready to embark on new adventures. It will not surprise me in the least if he does; I can see him at ninety scaling the Himalayas or—embarking in the first rocket to voyage to the moon.

But to come back to the relation between his writing and his sleeplessness . . . If one examines the dates given at the end of his books, indicating the time he spent on them, one is struck by the rapidity with which he executed them as well as by the speed with which (all good-sized books) they succeed one another. All this implies one thing, to my mind, and that is 'obsession'. To write, one has to be possessed and obsessed. What is it that possesses and obsesses Cendrars? *Life*. He is a man in love with life—*et c'est tout*. No matter if he denies this at times, no matter if he vilifies the times or excoriates his contemporaries in the arts, no matter if he compares his own recent past with the present and finds the latter lacking, no matter if he deplores the trends, the tendencies, the philosop*hie*s and behaviour of the men of our epoch, he is the one man of our time who has proclaimed and trumpeted the fact that *today* is profound and beautiful. And it is just because he has anchored himself in the midst of contemporary life, where, as if from a conning tower, he surveys all life, past, present and future, the life of the stars as well as the life of the ocean depths, life in miniscule as well as the life grandiose, that I seize upon him as the shining example of the right principle, the right attitude towards life. No one can steep himself in the splendours of the past more than Cendrars; no one can hail the future with greater zest; but it is the present, the eternal present, which he glorifies, and with which he allies himself. It is such men, and only such men, who are in the tradition, who carry on. The others are backward lookers, idolaters, or else mere wraiths of hopefulness, *bonimenteurs*. With Cendrars you strike ore. And it is because he understands the present so profoundly, accepts it and is one with it, that he is able to predict the future so unerringly. Not that he sets himself up as a soothsayer! No, his prophetic remarks are made casually and discreetly; they are buried often in a maze of unrelated material. In this he often reminds me of the good physician. He knows

how to take the pulse. In fact, he knows all the pulses, like the Chinese physicians of old. When he says of certain men that they are sick, or of certain artists that they are corrupt or fakes, or of politicians in general that they are crazy, or of military men that they are criminals, he knows whereof he speaks. It is the *magister* in him which is speaking.

He has, however, another way of speaking which is more endearing to me. He can speak with tenderness. Lawrence, it will be remembered, originally thought of calling the book known as *Lady Chatterley's Lover* by the title *Tenderness*. I mention Lawrence's name because I remember vividly Cendrars' allusion to him on the occasion of his memorable visit to the Villa Seurat. 'You must think a lot of Lawrence,' he said questioningly. 'I do,' I replied. We exchanged a few words and then I recall him asking me fair and square if I did not believe Lawrence to be over-rated. It was the metaphysical side of Lawrence, I gathered, that was not to his liking, that was 'suspect', I would say. (And it was just at this period that I was engrossed in this particular aspect of Lawrence!) I am sure, at any rate, that my defence of Lawrence was weak and unsustained. To be truthful, I was much more interested in hearing Cendrars' view of the man than in justifying my own. Often, later, in reading Cendrars, this word 'tenderness' crossed my lips. It would escape involuntarily, rouse me from my reverie. Futile though it be, I would then indulge in endless speculation, comparing Lawrence's tenderness with Cendrars'. They are, I now think, of two distinct kinds. Lawrence's weakness is man, Cendrars' men. Lawrence longed to know men better; he wanted to work in common with them. It is in *Apocalypse* that he has some of the most moving passages—on the withering of the 'societal' instinct. They create real anguish in us—for Lawrence. They make us realize the tortures he suffered in trying to be 'a man among men'. With Cendrars I detect no hint of such deprivation or mutilation. In the ocean of humanity Cendrars swims as blithely as a porpoise or a dolphin. In his narratives he is always together with men, one with them in deed, one with them in thought. If he is a solitary, he is nevertheless fully and completely a man. He is also the brother of all men. Never does he set himself up as superior to his fellow man. Lawrence thought himself superior, often, often—I think that is undeniable—and very often he was anything but. Very often it is a lesser man who 'instructs' him—or shames him. Lawrence had too great a love for 'humanity' to understand or get along with his fellow-man.

It is when we come to their respective fictional characters that we sense the rift between these two figures. With the exception of the self-portraits, given in *Sons and Lovers*, *Kangaroo*, *Aaron's Rod* and such like, all Lawrence's characters are mouthpieces for his philosophy or the philosophy he wishes to depose. They are ideational creatures, moved about like chess pieces. They have blood in them all right, but it is the blood which Lawrence has pumped into them. Cendrars' characters issue from life and their activity stems from life's moving vortex. They, too, of course, acquaint us with his philosophy of life, but obliquely, in the elliptic manner of art.

The tenderness of Cendrars exudes from all pores. He does not spare his characters; neither does he revile or castigate them. His harshest words, let me say parenthetically, are usually reserved for the poets and artists whose work he considers spurious. Aside from these diatribes, you will rarely find him passing judgment upon others. What you do find is that, in laying bare the weaknesses or faults of his subjects, he is unmasking, or endeavouring to unmask, their essential heroic nature. All the diverse figures—human, all-too-human—which crowd his books are glorified in their basic, intrinsic being. They may or may not have been heroic in the face of death; they may or may not have been heroic before the tribunal of justice; but they *are* heroic in the common struggle to assert and uphold their own primal being. I mentioned a while ago the book by Al Jennings which Cendrars so ably translated. The very choice of this book is indicative of my point. This mite of a man, this outlaw with an exaggerated sense of justice and honour, who is 'up for life' (but eventually pardoned by Theodore Roosevelt), this terror of the West who wells over with tenderness, is just the sort of man Cendrars *would*

choose to tell the world about, just the sort of man he *would* uphold as being filled with the dignity of life. Ah, how I should like to have been there when Cendrars eventually caught up with him, in Hollywood of all places! Cendrars has written of this 'brief encounter' and I heard of it myself from Al Jennings' own lips when I met him by chance a few years ago—in a bookshop there in Hollywood.

In the books written since the Occupation, Cendrars has much to say about the war—the first war, naturally, not only because it was less inhuman but because the future course of his life, I might say, was decided by it. He has also written about the second war, particularly about the fall of Paris and the incredible exodus preceding it. Haunting pages, reminiscent of *Revelation*: equalled in war literature only by St. Exupéry's *Flight to Arras*. (See the section of his book, *Le Lotissement du Ciel*, which first appeared in the *revue*, *Le Cheval dé Troie*, entitled: *Un Nouveau Patron pour l'Aviation*.)[1] In all these recent books Cendrars reveals himself more and more intimately. So penetrative, so naked, are these glimpses he permits us that one instinctively recoils. So sure, swift and deft are these revelations that it is like watching a safe-cracker at work. In these flashes stand revealed the whole swarm of intimates whose lives dovetail with his own. Exposed through the lurid searchlight of his Cyclopean eye, they are caught in the flux and surveyed from every angle. Here there is 'completion' of a sort. Nothing is omitted or altered for the sake of the narrative. With these books the 'narrative' is stepped up, broadened out, the supports and buttresses battered away, in order that the book may become part of life, swim with life's currents, and remain for ever identical with life. Here one comes to grips with the men Cendrars truly loves, the men he fought beside in the trenches and whom he saw wiped out like rats, the gypsies of the Zone whom he consorted with in the good old days, the ranchers and other figures from the South American scene, the porters, concierges, tradesmen, truck drivers and 'people of no account' (as we say), and it is with the utmost sympathy and understanding that he treats these latter. What a gallery! Infinitely more exciting, in every sense of the word, than Balzac's gallery of 'types'. This is the real *Human Comedy*. No sociological studies, à la Zola. No satirical puppet show, à la Thackeray. No pan-humanity, à la Jules Romains. Here in these latter books, though minus the aim and purpose of the great Russian, but perhaps with another aim which we will understand better later, at any rate, with equal amplitude, violence, humour, tenderness and religious —yes, religious—fervour, Cendrars gives us the French equivalent of Dostoievsky's outpourings in such works as *The Idiot*, *The Possessed*, *The Brothers Karamazov*. A production which could only be realised, consummated, in the ripe middle years of life.

Everything now forthcoming has been digested a thousand times. Again and again Cendrars has pushed back—where? into what deep well?—the multiform story of his life. This heavy, molten mass of experience raw and refined, subtle and crude, digested and pre-digested, which had been lodging in his entrails like a torpid and amorphous dinosaur idly flapping its rudimentary wings, this cargo destined for eventual delivery at the exact time and the exact place, demanded a touch of dynamite to be set off. From June 1940 to 21 August 1943, Cendrars remained awesomely silent. *Il s'est tu. Chut! Motus!* What starts him writing again is a visit from his friend Edouard Peisson, as he relates in the opening pages of *l'Homme Foudroyé*. *En passant* he evokes the memory of a certain night in 1915, at the front—'the most dreadful I ever experienced.' There were other occasions, one suspects, before the critical visit of his friend Peisson, which might have served to detonate the charge. But perhaps on these occasions the fuse burned out too quickly or was damp or smothered under by the weight of world events. But let us drop these useless speculations. Let us dive into section 17 of *Un Nouveau Patron Pour l'Aviation* . . .

This brief section begins with the recollection of a sentence of Rémy de Gourmont's: 'And it shows great progress that, where women prayed before, cows now

[1] Editions Denoël, Paris, 1949

chew the cud . . . ' In a few lines comes this, from Cendrars' own mouth:

'Beginning on 10th May, Surrealism descended upon earth: not the works of absurd poets who pretend to be such and who, at most, are but sou-realistes since they preach the subconscious, but the work of Christ, the only poet of the sur-real . . .

'If ever I had faith, it was on that day that grace should have touched me . . . '

Follow two paragraphs dealing in turbulent, compressed fury with the ever execrable condition of war. Like Goya, he repeats: '*J'ai vu.*' The second paragraph ends thus: 'The sun had stopped. The weather forecast announced an anticyclone lasting forty days. It couldn't be! For which reason everything went wrong: gear-wheels would not lock, machinery everywhere broke down: the dead-point of everything.'

The next five lines will ever remain in my memory:

'No, on 10th May, humanity was far from adequate to the event. Lord! Above, the sky was like a backside with gleaming buttocks and the sun an inflamed anus. What else but . . . could ever have issued from it? And modern man screamed with fear . . . '

This man of 21 August 1943, who is exploding in all directions at once, had of course already delivered himself of a wad of books, not least among them, we shall probably discover one day, being the ten volumes of *Notre Pain Quotidien* which he composed intermittently over a period of ten years in a château outside Paris, to which manuscripts he never signed his name, confiding the chests containing this material to various safety vaults in different parts of South America and then throwing the keys away. ('*Je voudrais rester l'Anonyme*,' he says.)

In the books begun at Aix-en-Provence are voluminous Notes, placed at the ends of the various sections. I will quote just one, from *Bourlinguer* (the section on Genoa), which constitutes an everlasting tribute to the poet so dear to French men of letters:

'Dear Gerard de Nerval, man of the crowd, night-walker, slang-ist, impenitent dreamer, neurasthenic lover of the Capital's small theatres and the vast necropoli of the East: architect of Solomon's Temple, translator of Faust, personal secretary to the Queen of Sheba, Druid of the 1st and 2nd class, sentimental vagabond of the Ile-de-France, last of the Valois, child of Paris, lips of gold, you hung yourself in the mouth of a sewer after shooting your poems up to the sky and now your shade swings ever before them, ever larger and larger, between Notre-Dame and Saint-Merry, and your fiery Chimearas range this square of the heavens like six dish-evelled and terrifying comets. By your appeal to the New Spirit you for ever disturbed our feeling today: and nowadays men could not go on living without this anxiety:

'The Eagle has already passed: the New Spirit calls me . . . ' (Horus, str. III, v. 9)

On page 244, in the same body of Notes, Cendrars states the following: 'The other day I was sixty and it is only today, as I reach the end of the present tale, that I begin to believe in my writer's vocation . . .'

Put that in your pipe and smoke it, you lads of twenty-five, thirty and forty years of age who are constantly belly-aching because you have not yet succeeded in establishing a reputation. Be glad that you are still alive, still *living* your life, still garnering experience, still enjoying the bitter fruits of isolation and neglect!

I would have liked to dwell on many singular passages in these recent books replete with the most astounding facts, incidents, literary and historic events, scientific and occult allusions, curiosa of literature, bizarre types of men and women, feasts, drunken bouts, humorous escapades, tender idylls, anecdotes concerning remote places, times, legends, extraordinary colloquies with extraordinary individuals, reminiscences of golden days, burlesques, fantasies, myths, inventions, introspections and eviscerations . . . I would have liked to speak at length of that singular author and even more singular man, Gustave Le Rouge, the author of 312 books of which the reader has most likely never heard, the variety, nature, style and contents of which Cendrars dwells on *con amore*; I would like to have given the reader some little

flavour of the closing section, *Vendetta*, of *l'Homme Foudroyé*, which is direct from the lips of Sawo the gypsy; I would like to have taken the reader to La Cornue, chez Paquita, or to that wonderful hide-out in the south of France where, hoping to finish a book in peace and tranquillity, Cendrars abandons the page which he had slipped into the typewriter after writing a line or two, and never looks at it again but gives himself up to pleasure, idleness, reverie and drink; I would like to have given the reader at least an inkling of that hair-raising story of the 'homunculi' which Cendrars recounts at length in *Bourlinguer* (the section called *Genes*), but if I were to dip into these extravaganzas, I should never be able to extricate myself.

I shall jump instead to the last book received from Cendrars, the one called *La Banlieue de Paris*, published by La Guilde du Livre, Lausanne. It is illustrated with 130 photographs by Robert Doisneau, sincere, moving, unvarnished documents which eloquently supplement the text. *De nouveau une belle collaboration.* (*Vive les collaborateurs, les vrais!*) The text is fairly short—fifty large pages—but haunting pages, written *sur le vif.* (From 15 July to 31 August 1949.) If there were nothing more noteworthy in these pages than Cendrars' description of a night at Saint-Denis on the eve of an aborted revolution, this short text would be worth preserving. But there are other passages equally sombre and arresting, or nostalgic, poignant, saturated with atmosphere, saturated with the pullulating effervescence of the sordid suburbs. Mention has often been made of Cendrars' rich vocabulary, of the poetic quality of his prose, of his ability to incorporate in his rhapsodic passages the monstrous jargon and terminology of science, industry, invention. This document, which is a sort of retrospective elegy, is an excellent example of his virtuosity. In memory, he moves in on the suburbs from east, south, north and west, and, as if armed with a magic wand, resuscitates the drama of hope, longing, failure, ennui, despair, frustration, misery and resentment which occupies the lives of the denizens of this vast belt. In one compact paragraph, the second in the section called *Nord*, Cendrars gives a graphic, physical summary of all that makes up the hideous suburban terrain. It is a bird's eye view of the ravages which follow in the wake of industry. A little later he gives us a detailed description of the interior of one of England's war plants, 'a shadow factory', which is in utter contrast to the foregoing. It is a masterful piece of '*reportage*' in which the cannon plays the rôle of *vedette*. But in paying his tribute to the factory, Cendrars makes it clear where he stands. It is the one kind of work he has no stomach for. '*Mieux vaut être un vagabond*', is his dictum. In a few swift lines he volplanes over the eternal bloody war business and, with a cry of shame for the Hiroshima 'experiment', he launches the staggering figures of the last war's havoc tabulated by a Swiss review for the use and the benefit of those who are preparing the coming carnival of death. They belong, these figures, just as the beautiful arsenals belong, and the hideous *banlieue*. And finally, for he has had them in mind throughout, Cendrars asks: 'What of the children? Who are they? Whence do they come? Where are they going?' Referring us back to the photos of Robert Doisneau, he evokes the figures of David and Goliath—to let us know what indeed the little ones may have in store for us.

No mere document, this book. It is something I should like to own in a breast-pocket edition, to carry with me should I ever wander forth again. Something to take one's bearings by . . .

It has been my lot to prowl the streets, by night as well as day, of these God-forsaken precincts of woe and misery, not only here in my own country but in Europe too. In their spirit of desolation they are all alike. Those which ring the proudest cities of the earth are the worst. They stink like chancres. When I look back on my past, I can scarcely see anything else, smell anything else but these festering empty lots, these filthy, shrouded streets, these rubbish heaps of jerries indiscriminately mixed with the garbage and refuse, the forlorn, utterly senseless household objects, toys, broken gadgets, and vases abandoned by the poverty-stricken

helpless creatures who make up the population of these districts. In moments of high fettle I have threaded my way amidst the bric-à-brac and shambles of these quarters and thought to myself—What a poem! What a documentary film! Often I recovered my sober senses only by cursing and gnashing my teeth, by flying into wild, futile rages, by picturing myself a benevolent dictator who would eventually 'restore order, peace and justice.' I have been obsessed for weeks and months on end by such experiences. But I have never succeeded in making music of it. (And to think that Erik Satie, whose domicile Robert Doisneau gives us in one of the photos, to think that this man also 'made music' in that crazy building is something which makes my scalp itch.) No, I have never succeeded in making music of this insensate material. I have tried a number of times, but my spirit is still too young, too filled with repulsion. I lack that ability to recede, to assimilate, to pound the mortar with a chemist's skill. But Cendrars has succeeded, and that is why I take my hat off to him. *Salut, cher Blaise Cendrars!* You are a musician. Salute! And glory be! We have need of the poets of night and desolation as well as the other sort. We have need of comforting words—and you give them —as well as vitriolic diatribes. When I say 'we', I mean all of us. Ours is a thirst unquenchable for an eye such as yours, an eye which condemns without passing judgment, an eye which wounds by its naked glance and heals at the same time. Especially in America do 'we' need your historic touch, your velvety backward sweep of the plume. Yes, we need it perhaps more than anything you have to offer us. History has passed over our scarred *terrains vagues* at a gallop. It has left us a few names, a few absurd monuments—and a veritable chaos of bric-à-brac. The one race which inhabited these shores and which did not mar the work of God was the redskins. Today they occupy the waste lands. For their 'protection' we have organised a pious sort of concentration camp. It has no barbed wires, no instruments of torture, no armed guards. We simply leave them there to die out . . .

But I cannot end on this dolorous note, which is only the backfire of those secret rumblings which begin anew whenever the past crops up. There is always a rear view to be had from these crazy edifices which our minds inhabit so tenaciously. The view from Satie's back window is the kind I mean. Wherever in the 'zone' there is a cluster of shabby buildings, there dwell the little people, the salt of the earth, as we say, for without them we would be left to starve, without them that crust which is thrown to the dogs and which we pounce on like wolves would have only the savour of death and revenge. Through those oblong windows from which the bedding hangs I can see my pallet in the corner where I have flopped for the night, to be rescued again in miraculous fashion the next sun-down, always by a 'nobody', which means, when we get to understand human speech, by an angel in disguise. What matter if with the coffee one swallows a mislaid emmenagogue? What matter if a stray roach clings to one's tattered garments? Looking at life from the rear window one can look down at one's past as into a still mirror in which the days of desperation merge with the days of joy, the days of peace, and the days of deepest friendship. Especially do I feel this way, think this way, when I look into my *French* backyard. There all the meaningless pieces of my life fall into a pattern. I see no waste motion. It is all as clear as 'The Cracow Poem' to a chess fiend. The music it gives off is as simple as were the strains of 'Sweet Alice Ben Bolt' to my childish ears. More, it is beautiful, for, as Sir H. Rider Haggard says in his autobiography, 'the naked truth is always beautiful, even when it tells of evil.'

My dear Cendrars, you must at times have sensed a kind of envy in me for all that you have lived through, digested, and vomited forth transformed, transmogrified, trans-substantiated. As a child you played by Virgil's tomb; as a mere lad you tramped across Europe, Russia, Asia, to stoke the furnace in some forgotten hotel in Pekin; as a young man, in the bloody days of the Legion, you elected to remain a corporal, no more; as a war victim you begged for alms in your own dear Paris, and a little later you were on the bum in

New York, Boston, New Orleans, Frisco . . . You have roamed far, you have idled the days away, you have burned the candle at both ends, you have made friends and enemies, you have dared to write the truth, you have known how to be silent, you have pursued every path to the end, and you are still in your prime, still building castles in the air, still breaking plans, habits, resolutions, because *to live* is your primary aim, and you *are* living and will continue to live both in the flesh and in the roster of the illustrious ones. How foolish, how absurd of me to think that I might be of help to *you*, that by putting in my little word for you here and there, as I said before, I would be advancing your cause. You have no need of *my* help or of any one's. Just living your life as you do, you automatically aid us, all of us, everywhere where life is lived. Once again I doff my hat to you. I bow in reverence. I have not the right to salute you because I am not your peer. I prefer to remain your devotee, your loving disciple, your spiritual brother *in der Ewigkeit.*

You always close your greetings with '*ma main amie*'. I grasp that warm left hand you proffer and I wring it with joy, with gratitude, and with an everlasting benediction on my lips.

Cendrars 1936 *Jean Gruerin*

Senor Gaya, a distinguished art critic and the Director of the Galerias Layetanas in Barcelona, writes the second article in a series on modern Spanish painters

FRANCISCO COSSÍO

JUAN ANTONIO GAYA NUÑO

FRANCISCO COSSÍO, *his seas, his beaches and seaweed and the nautical flavour of his painting:* that, if it were not rather long, could be the title of this article, for the Atlantic influence on Cossío started with him crossing the Ocean when still only a baby. He was born in Cuba on 20 October 1898, and was brought to Spain by his parents when the island became independent. There is a great deal of sea to be covered from Pinar del Río to Santander, and even though only an infant in arms, he was in some way impressed by the constancy of a subtle, blue-green, rhythmic and abstract element that was perpetually without form, never chained to an outline or cramped in the limits of architecture. This element, this mass of water wrapped in mist, saturates all painters from Santander, the first port of Castile. Emigrants from Burgos, Segovia and Soria make their way to America by Santander; there you find men who know Dover and Manhattan; there you find the spirit of the Atlantic.

Francisco Cossío, as the youngest of the 'indianos' to return from America, was called, and still is by his friends, by the affectionate diminutive of Pancho. Santander, where the actions of so many Cossíos gained greater or lesser degrees of fame during the first half of the twentieth century, was no longer a port of embarkation for Cuba when Pancho was a child. It was declining, but it kept its cosmopolitan character and Menéndez y Pelayo could still boast that many of his friends spoke English. Artistically the town was practically dead, for it had been overpopulated by 'hidalgos', some of the best of whom had been Cossíos, cultivated and gentle people who became scattered throughout Spain, taking with them their fine Castilian accent. Pancho's speech retains that slightly Asturian, northern flavour that passes unnoticed amongst us, the people of the Meseta. He may easily be forgiven it because, as a 'montañes', he is the most affectionate person. On seeing a friend in the street, he will stop, throw back his head and open his arms wide, ready to embrace him warmly. Those who do not know Cossío perhaps believe him to be unsociable and misanthropic; in actual fact he is only a little deaf, which makes him rather more noisy and boisterous in his manner than most Spaniards.

Cossío, Pancho Cossío, or just Pancho (but never Francisco Gutiérrez Cossío, which is really his name) is a strange and a fantastic person, aristocratic and lordly, good talker and better listener, sportsman and fanatical supporter of boat-racing and football, founder of the 'Racing F.C.' of Santander. His aristocratic and aesthetic instinct has led him to live at the top of one of those modest Madrid sky-scrapers, from where he has a wide view of the plain of Castile. There he has his laboratory of marvellous pictorial chemistry, and at his feet the vision of the city of a million and a half inhabitants links him with the sky, purifying his style and his Parisian training to produce an art which, even before his hand traces it, possesses a certain colour and flavour, a quality of its own.

I have never asked Pancho Cossío when he first started to paint, in the same way as one would hardly dare to ask Petrus Christus or Vermeer of Delft. The question is not when did he start painting, but when did his painting first reach such an extraordinary quality. When still very young, he left Santander and went to Madrid, to study in the Escuela de Bellas Artes under Cecilio Plá, who must have been a very

good teacher, to judge by the praise given to him by so many painters of the most dissimilar views. It was there or in the Prado that Cossío learnt that a painted surface should possess a brilliance and polish that is not due to any varnish, not even that of time, but is infused in every particle of colour. This is the first of Cossío's triumphs, because all art these days seems so painfully new-born, with the paint too fresh and traces of haste all over it. The oils of some painters become cracked and blackened even during their lifetime, because the ways of Renaissance art have been neglected. The artist nowadays is less of an artisan and his art is more fleeting.

But as Cossío combined contemporary influence with a good artisan training, he had already achieved much when he went to Paris, where his art continued to develop from 1923 to 1932. This French school was so frail and transitory that the solid name of Cossío was very soon incorporated amongst its triumphs. In these first steps to fame he joined the company of other Spaniards (Bores, Viñes and de la Serna) under the auspices of the Gallerie de France and 'Cahiers d'Art', and saw his horizon widening through that bi-nationality so freely bestowed by the French on successful artists, such as Picasso. Cossío was twenty-five years old when he went to Paris, a youth saturated in Bohemianism; periods of exuberance inspired by Christian Zervos and Pierre Gueguen alternated with long stays in bed in his cheap *pension*, smoking 'Gaulois' until he was hoarse, a very long way from the lordly houses and habits of the Santander Cossíos.

Cossío acquired from Cubism a taste for using sand and ash on his early paintings and also a love of synthesis, something which he was always to keep. It was a geometrical synthesis, close to abstraction, pure and severe in colour. The starting-point of Cossío's career in this sphere may be taken as '*La caja de bizcochos*' or '*Los peces*', in 1927. The following year, when he exhibited in the Galerie Jean Boucher, he painted '*La familia*', '*Bodegón de los peces*' and '*El hombre del sombrero hongo*', and Paris was astonished to find that a painter apparently so rough should possess such extreme sensibility. The year 1929 is important in his career, not only on account of some excellent paintings ('*Bodegón de la silla*', '*En el café*'), but because he then began to paint pictures of sailors and boats, Atlantic subjects in which the forms have a tendency towards the prolonged oval. Fishes, waves, masts took on similar lines, always curved, just as the bowler hat of a person dominated his interiors. This Spaniard won over Paris, even with a style as smooth as his own and that of his group, based on precise, rounded forms and on wonderful blendings of grey such as may only be found in the finest works of Goya. Zervos said that his delicacy was always absorbed in his strength. Cossío united his sense of liberty—at times rather absurd—with a personal and stylistic discipline of extraordinary severity.

Cossío finished with bowler hats and devoted himself almost exclusively to Atlantic visions of his own land, happy to concentrate on sailing-ships, tempests and stormy seas which were in reality only pretexts for a marvellous blending of greenish tints and of whites and ochres, delicate and fugitive colours that were the work of a master. Cossío, a true sea-coast man, is fascinated by the sea and sailing-ships, but not by any sea, for the Mediterranean has no attractions for him. He really belongs to the Atlantic; with his love of waves and sails and his repressed baroque character, for he has that also, he was bound to love the curved line and, going even further, to assert that in Nature the straight line does not exist.

It is not an arbitrary conclusion to see 'españolismo'—an intuitive baroquism and romanticism—in this aversion to the straight line, an aversion that was even stronger when Cossío and the Galerie de France split in 1932. We find him somewhat disillusioned but still confident and determined to give his Parisian training a traditional and Spanish character. A small part of this training had been in the coincidence which had linked him with Bores, Viñes and de la Serna, with whom until now he had been nearly inseparable, and whom he was soon to leave far behind. Enthusiastic to carry on the Spanish tradition, he followed it in its quality, not in its patterns and rhythms. His painting is more

personal than he believes it to be himself, and in the same way his theories of aesthetic complexity have less importance than he thinks. It is very rare that an artist can recognise his own finest qualities, and it is usually of the strangest things that he boasts.

After the lively period in Paris, the first years in Santander were not very fruitful. Cossío began to take part in politics, and then the whole country took part in them, and painting stopped for a while. As time passed, his romanticism and ambition continued to grow, until we come nearer to the present day, when a large exhibition in the Museo Nacional de Arte Moderno proclaimed his quality to the whole of Spain. Out of all the works he has signed—with that bevelled, angular signature that is as perfectly considered and executed as any other part of the painting—we turn our attention to the sea-scapes, the portraits and then the still-lifes, all of them sprinkled with white specks like snowflakes, which constitute an extraordinary feat of perspective. As this sprinkling of white is superposed on the surface already painted, it serves to show, by comparison, the depth of the picture.

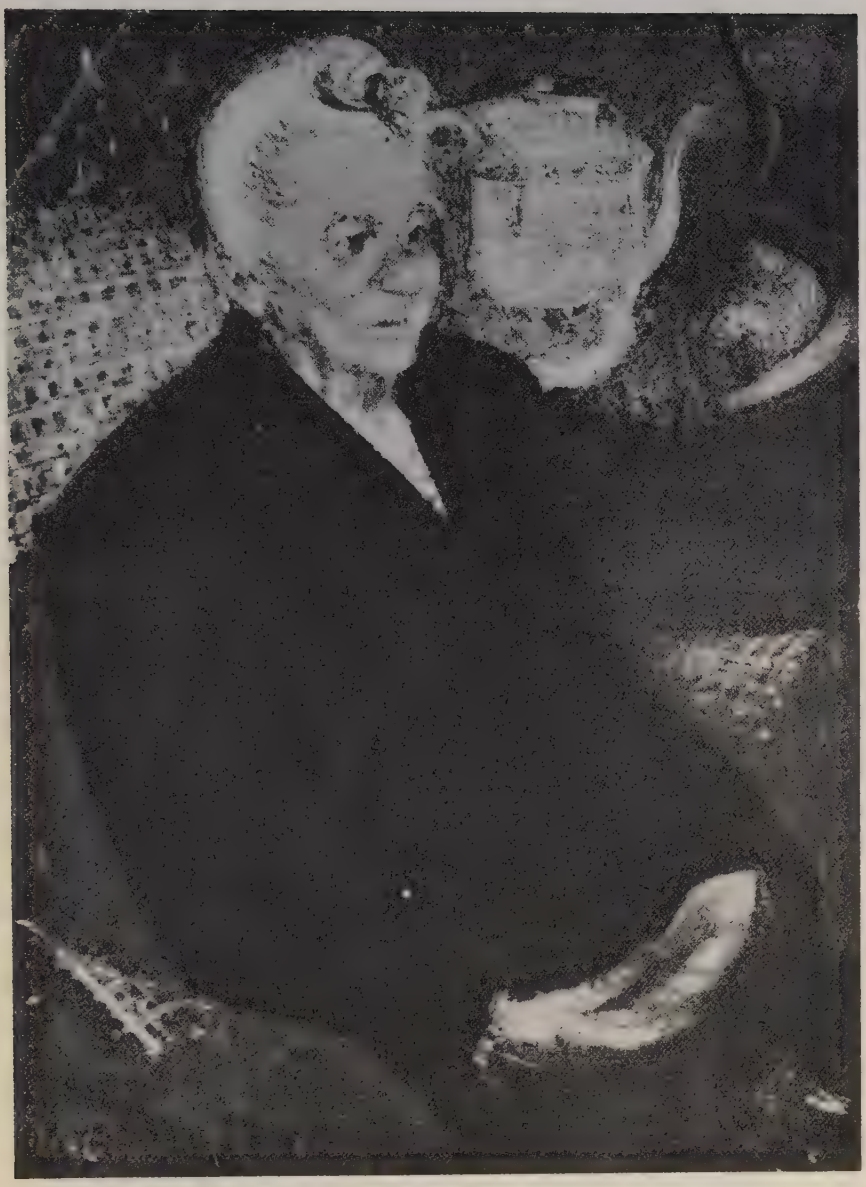
The green and grey sea-pictures of Cossío are not simply the parading of a single colour, since the white gives an unsuspected polychromic effect, as also does the romantic absurdity of the author. The titles ('*La ola*', '*El fuego de San Telmo*', '*Barco a vista de pájaro*', '*L'epave*', *El bergantín redondo*', '*Genios del mar*', etc.) testify to the profoundly Cantabrian character of his art. It is an oceanic art which in its essence portrays the sea of Santander. Cossío is passionately attached to his town, and never forgets that a certain great collector, the possessor of many good contemporary paintings, thought that Santander was the producer of fine artists since it was the only town represented in his collection by two painters, María Blanchard and Cossío. This is very flattering for Santander, but not particularly accurate, for a town may produce the artists but it does not set them on the road to success. Cossío has done a great deal more for his town, since in his imagination he has made it stretch right across the ocean, even as far as his unknown island of Cuba, and he has marked the way with green waves and seaweed and the fires of Saint Elmo. He is not even aware himself how tremendously romantic he is in this synthesis of the sea. But it has not been this characteristic that has brought him most fame, although his fishes ('*Peces en amarillo*', '*Peces en rojo*') belong more to the sea than to still-life. Cossío is too learned in all things to do with the sea to let them be the culmination of his work.

Another aspect of his work which shows it to be that of a master is his portraiture. Portraits have a very special importance for him; they are true, with very little idealisation, though they seem to be fragments of Italian murals transferred to canvas for their better preservation. The portraits of the Revilla family and the '*Señora Viuda de Galán*' are superb. The figures are well placed, not silhouetted, but slightly blurred, in his usual pseudo-monochromatic colouring; they are translucent, transparent, with that nacreous iridescence which, though usually present in his '*bodegones*', is always surprisingly found in the portraits. It is difficult to believe that these portraits have been painted in the twentieth century. They combine such energy with the most delicate subtlety, qualities which have never been united like this in any age, not even that of Van Dyck. But perhaps Van Dyck, the master of refined elegance, is not the closest parallel we could choose. One remembers more readily the ragged and untidy naturalness of Rembrandt. The '*Retrato de su madre*' at least is Rembrandtian, or rather the two versions of it are, one of which is in the Museo Nacional de Arte Moderno. But the other version, kept by the artist, is even better, and on the strength of it alone Cossío deserves to be included in any anthology of painting. Its only fault is that it has less colour and still less drawing than is absolutely essential, even less than his other paintings. It is so synthetic that no criticism will fit it, whether it be sententious and strict or extravagant and liberal. Anyway, I dare not comment on this portrait, for the more I look at it and think of it, the more it seems to resemble Rembrandt in its richness and beauty. A considerable assimilation of history and of art galleries has gone into the painting of this

picture, to create this synthesis in which there appears only a white-haired old woman, seated on a chair, with her bony hands crossed on her lap and a kerchief tied on her head. There are no other accessories and no other composition than the natural arrangement of the position, with the eyes brilliant and the rest of the picture subdued. There is black, grey-brown, ochre and mother-of-pearl; there is not a single one of the primary colours in this brilliant, exemplary and accomplished painting. His many portraits of official personages, none of them bad for that would not be possible, can never surpass the penetration of those maternal eyes, which have seen the passing of so many years in the lifetime of an old woman who lives in Santander, at number 15 Calle Gomez Oreña.

As skilled as he is in his sea-painting, and even almost too masterly in his portraits, I prefer Cossío in his '*bodegones*'. But before proceeding, it would be best to select a more accurate term. The English 'still life' or the French '*nature mort*' would be more suitable for these works of Cossío, for they represent exactly the airy fragility of his objects, without the succulent or sensual associations connected with the Spanish '*bodegón*', which reminds you of bunches of fruit, red meat, game and shining fish, all in a disorderly invitation to gluttony. The '*bodegones*' or '*natures morts*' of Cossío also contain fruit, certainly, but his figs and pears, dehumanised in that ineffaceable style left by the influence of the Galerie de France, have acquired an appearance that is too multicoloured, crystalline and iridescent—qualities that you would imagine belonged to the most beautiful of fruits. Furthermore, these figs and pears are aware that their purpose is to give relief and a rounded effect to another side of the canvas, a more important side perhaps, where there appears a letter addressed to 'Sr. D. Francisco Cossío, Plaza del Callao 4, Madrid'. Yes, an envelope with the address and a smudged postage stamp on it. Very well, then, when a painter reaches the point where something as simple as an envelope becomes a perfect subject, and its white surface is painted with as much love as though it were something extremely plastic, polychromatic and corporeal, then one may safely affirm that the painter is a great and exquisite artist. Cossío must know it when he directs these letters to his canvases, letters which contain only a message of security.

Playing-cards as well as letters find their place in Cossío's paintings and have been popular with him since 1928. His '*Baraja española* and his '*Baraja francesa*' are very fine still-lifes, with the advantage of displaying his tinted and solid whites. These whites are rarely absolute or continuous; instead they are usually wrinkled and dirty, revealing a technical skill that is truly marvellous. Whether the whites be pure or dirty, they always fulfil their purpose, to afford a contrast in Cossío's austere and brownish monochromatic paintings. In that masterpiece of twentieth-century Spanish painting, the '*Bodegón de porcelanas*' (Col. Beamonte, Madrid), the white plays an important part in the composition, which is extremely clever, sober and geometric, yet at the same time rich, velvety and magnificent. But the great richness and subtle smoothness of the picture are not due to its subjects, but to the way they are portrayed. The painting is practically monochromatic, since white is not considered by painters to be a colour, and certainly it is not a primary one. To this, then, is largely due the delightful effect of the picture. The subject represented is not just a lamp with a few chairs and some porcelain knick-knacks, but something strange to these objects, as is the colour. It is a colour they have never possessed in reality, but a colour that attracts us in Cossío's mountain house, with its restrained, bourgeois and traditional character. This still-life exceeds, and by a great deal, the best works of this kind by Claesz and Heda. No, that is not enough, and the association of names takes us to Rembrandt. We can imagine it painted in Utrecht or Amsterdam, because something of the fine painting of the seventeenth century seems to be imbued in some of the best works of Pancho Cossío. I do not think any spirit coming from post-Cubist circles has risen to such a category of undying art as in this wonderful painting. Nor, in this century, has there been a work which has been produced with such a virtuosity of colouring, such a delight in soft colours and with such an incredible technical ability.



Cossío *Portrait of his Mother*

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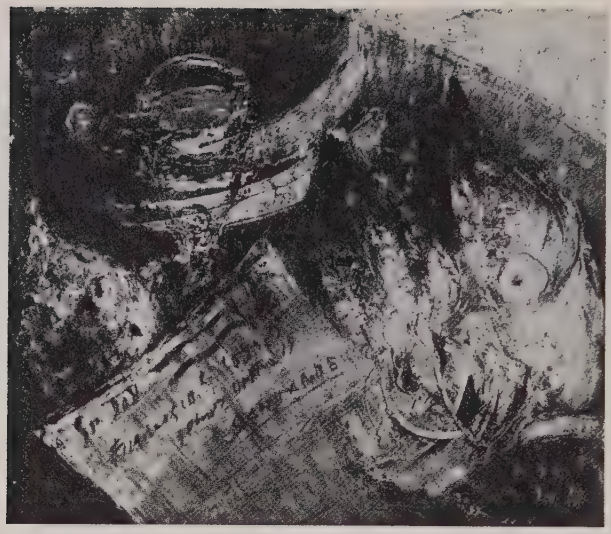
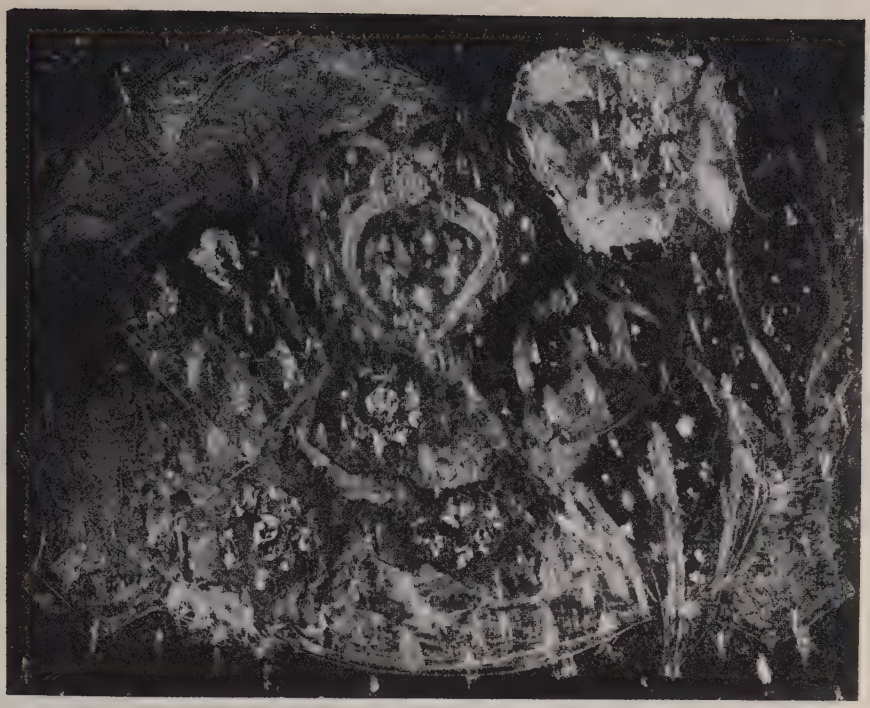
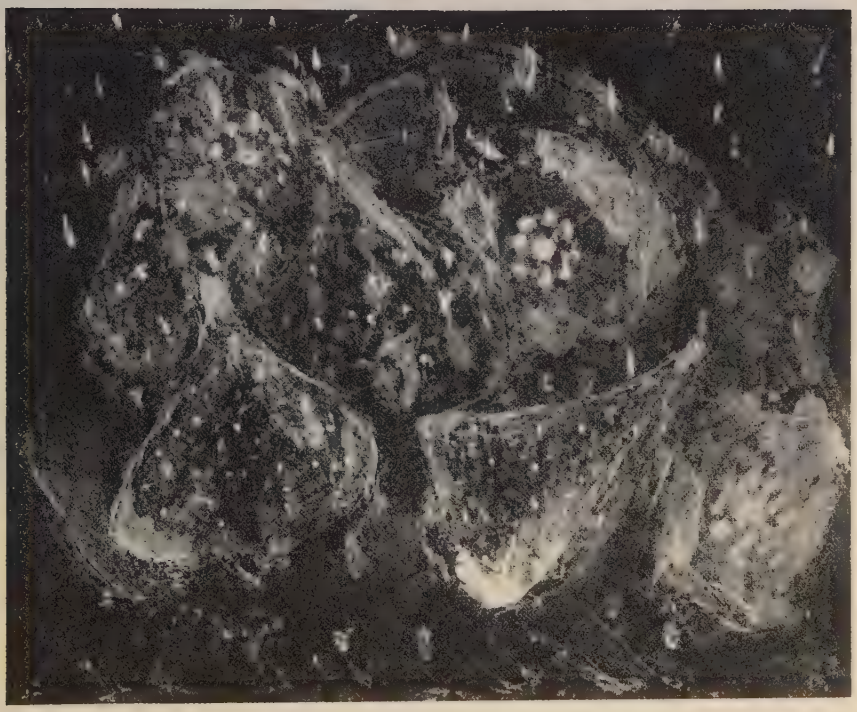


Still Life with Letter

El bergantin redondo



Still Life



Still Life

Still Life with White Porcelain

What astounds many of Cossío's fellow artists is his technique, and since it is so wonderful and mysterious, it is a fascinating matter to discuss. There will be no secrets discovered though, for laymen like myself just do not know them, and those who wish to find out may resort to a documentary film made on the occasion of Cossío's sensational success in his exhibition at the Museo de Arte Moderno in Madrid. In this Cossío appeared as an actor in earnest. Twenty years before he had been jokingly included in the film by Salvador Dali and Luis Bunuel, '*L'age d'or*', younger then, it is true, but less glorious. Pancho appeared working on one of his canvases, over which he spread the colour, smoothing it over with the spatula. He rubbed it, scraped it and then used the spatula again with a masterly assurance. But even if one compiled a meticulous recipe of this procedure, and others, of Cossío, no one could equal it; the artisan skill of centuries assists him in his exclusive flashes of light and veiled colours which, with aristocratic fastidiousness, he does not allow to appear in any picture that may be liked and understood by everyone.

I have seen Cossío at work on one of the enormous canvases he is now painting for the church of the Carmelites in Madrid, and I thought I was watching an artist of the seventeenth century, for they must have handled their paint-pots in just the same way, and must have used the same sort of rough pulley to raise or lower the canvas. Above all, the figures, the saints, belonging as they did to this century, had all the realism of the great saints in the Prado. When they are finished, they will be the only great pictures produced by all the Spanish Catholic painting of the twentieth century.

As they are not to be finished until the spring, we decided that he could take a short rest, and Cossío, naked to the waist, took me to a corner of the monastery where the brother Juan Narduck is buried, called in the order Fray Juan de la Miseria, a mediocre painter who portrayed Santa Teresa de Jesús. In front of that grave there is room for another and Cossío assured me that it was destined for him. Well does he deserve it, on the condition that he does not occupy it for many years to come. Then, accompanied by a monk, we went up on to the roof and there the three of us chatted for some time, the artist, the monk and myself, in between a twenty-six floor sky-scraper and the blue background of the Guadarrama. Pancho Cossío, with his art, permits the incongruity of the sky-scrapers and the Velazquean mountains, because he has been able to combine many centuries in one small piece of canvas. Perhaps the monk would have preferred the eighteenth century, I perhaps the twentieth. We three, with the painting of Pancho Cossío, soaked ourselves in the beautiful Madrid morning, while the burning wind blew down from the Guadarrama.

3

Mr. Ussher, the Irish philosopher and writer, gives his interpretation of 'Cinderella'

THE SLIPPER ON THE STAIR

ARLAND USSHER

THE story of Cinderella, known to English children in the rather different version of Perrault's seventeenth-century *Contes de Fées*, is a very sensitive allegory for the Soul's discovery of its Image—that Image which lives hidden, like an invisible spark among the ashes, in the humdrum hours and tasks. We find again the familiar pattern of a rich man who had two wives: one in the past—whose grave is piously decked in winter by the snowfall—and another, a malignant one, in the present. Cinderella is a seed of the intuitive consciousness which, like a Creator in myth, has returned to its heaven; and her growth and dignity are crushed by the 'tares' scattered in the field by that Enemy, the mental consciousness. The *two* step-sisters represent the split and fragmented 'abstractions' of the logical faculty, which usurp the childhood-kingdom of the imagination's singleness; they are not even her half-sisters, for they are wholly bad—the second wife has imported them like bloodless concepts, ready-made, into the house of the mind. Cinderella's father, journeying one day to the market—that universal hive or passional heart, where the values of things are made and dealt out—demands of the maidens what presents he shall bring them; the step-sisters ask for the gold and jewels and other vanities of social acclaim, but Cinderella asks for the first hazel-twig that shall knock against his hat on the home journey. The Tree of Life, one feels, knocks with a perpetual reminder against our closed consciousness on its self-satisfied rounds; and the hazel-wand is the traditional symbol of rebirth, the badge of the magician's craft. The father brings the presents as he is requested, and Cinderella plants the twig on the grave of the mother, where it grows into a noble tree; and, as Cinderella waters the growing tree with her tears, a white bird descends on the tree and throws down, as from a Christian tree, whatever may be the wish of her heart. Connection, we feel, has been re-established between earth and the abyss of air, through the consecrating waters of suffering; and the hard flame of conventional values—typified by the gold and jewels which the father brought from that earth's centre, the market—has turned to the living flame of the heart's wishes, which the mother rains down from the periphery of heaven.

But now the king of the country holds a feast, that his son may choose himself a bride from among all the fair maidens of his kingdom. The step-sisters prepare themselves joyfully to attend it, and Cinderella dearly wishes she might go also; the stepmother, however, gives her permission only if the poor girl shall pick a dish of lentils out of the ashes—where they have been derisively thrown—within two hours. The task is an image of Cinderella's destiny, for she is herself a seed of imaginative life amid the cold ash of dead and self-glorifying mental concepts. The stepmother had reckoned she could not do it within the time, but Cinderella goes, significantly, to the *back-door* and calls all the birds of the air to her aid; for, as in the stories of Wise Simpletons, intuition can cross the breach which our mind-language has set between the human and the animal —and, in the labour of selection, we must call upon the primitive instinctive faculties of all life. The stepmother, baffled by Cinderella's success, ordains a new task—she shall pick out *two* dishes of lentils in *one* hour; but Cinderella again triumphs by the aid of the birds. It was in vain for the cruel stepmother to prescribe any length of time, for the inspiration of Choice is a flash—an Annunciation from another dimension—a fertilisation of Time by the Eternal, as in the ornithological allegories of the conceptions of Leda and Mary. But once more the stepmother revokes her promise, and she departs to the ball with

her two daughters; and now Cinderella in despair goes to the hazel tree, and begs that she may be thrown down the silk clothes and embroidered shoes that she needs. The inspiration of the heaven-dwellers is insufficient; it must be joined to the weight and materiality of earth before it has a personality to bring to the dance; Cinderella, like the doubting and despairing disciples, must feel the *physicality* of the over-earthly before she can go forth on her heavenly, conquering path. She puts on the festal clothes and makes her way to the ball, where the stepmother and sisters do not recognise her, for—like the disciples at Emmaus—'their eyes are held', and they lack the 'ghostly' power of divination which can penetrate all disguises. The prince dances with her and is reluctant to let go of her hand; he says to all rival gallants 'This is *my* partner.' It is a vivid touch—'he did not want to let go of her hand'—suggesting the painful transitoriness of the moment of vision; we hold the idea, and know it for our very own, but, even as we hold it, we feel it being wrenched from us by the impersonal logic-chains of the dance. Her noble partner wishes to escort her home, to learn, as other young sparks on like occasions have wished to learn, to whom the beautiful *inconnue* belongs; but she slips from him at her door, and takes refuge (hard though the feat may seem to the imagination) in the dove-cot. The father opens the door to the prince, who demands that he bring axes and hammers and break open her odd place of refuge; but Cinderella in the meantime has jumped out on the other side, surrendered her finery to the befriending bird under the hazel tree, and resumed her place among the ashes. They find no one but a leather-aproned kitchen-wench, sleeping by the glimmer of the oil lamp in the chimney corner, as it were the trimmed lamp of one of the discreet virgins in the parable. Is it not thus that we pursue the fleeting inspiration—with the hammer of our will and the cutting tools of reason—into the recesses of the brain, only to find it has lost the gay hues which charmed us, and has retreated into the Subsconcious? On the next day, the same history recurs. Cinderella goes to the tree, and repeats her rhyme—

Shiver and quiver little tree,
Rain down silver and gold over me.

Again, as it were, the Veil of consciousness trembles, and again the friendly bird brings its gifts, the dress and shoes bedecked with silver and gold—silver of reflection and gold of proud instinctive life. Again she appears in the ball and dances all night long with the princely wooer; again he attempts to accompany her to her door and she escapes him—this time into the branches of a pear tree. Axes and hatchets are brought; but she has slipped over the garden wall, dropped the bright raiment, and taken her customary place among the cinders. After the dead wood of the dove-cot—which a German proverb compares to the human head, where thoughts bird-footed come and go—we reach the live wood of the pear tree—the human thicket of the body; the prince is nearing the total and vital apprehension.

On the third day—always that *third* day of resurrections—she is again miraculously at the ball, and now the slippers are of pure gold; but this time the prince has been wary, and has ordered the staircase to be smeared with pitch. An inverted Peter, he has affirmed his faith three times, and the staircase—always suggestive, in fairy tales, of the ladder of logic—has become a sympathetic retentive medium. Again Cinderella escapes him, but on this occasion one of her slippers remains sticking in the pitch. One is tempted to see here a suggestion of that dense dark stuff of our subconsciousness which clogs the bright feet of the passions; it is the element in which Cinderella has lived, the element of the toiling earth, but to draw her out of it the prince must introduce some earthliness into the palace of his own thought—reason must set imaginative traps for the image, as the logic of Greece trapped and held the *Event* of Judea. On the next day the prince takes the slipper to the father—like every Crusoe who has discovered a footprint-on-the-shore, questioning high heaven—and claims for his bride that girl whose foot shall be the perfect fit. The step-sisters try it on, each in turn, but the one must cut off her toe, the other slice her heel; and the prince riding off—first with one, then with the second—is warned by Cinderella's friends, the pigeons, that the shoe

is a misfit, that there is blood on the foot, that the true bride sits at home. Those empty and conventional images, like the clichés of our popular press, are not *his* image, and cannot take the shape of his golden new idea; but this is only discovered when he tries to 'ride' with them—the poem must be read, the music played, and some little bird (as we say of a flying hint) will tell you if all is not well. Finally he demands, in impatience, if there be not a third daughter, and the stepmother—though protestingly—produces the poor kitchen-wench; recognition follows and, speedily, the wedding. With the usual ruthlessness of the Tales, the step-sisters—attending the ceremony in ambitious hopes—have their eyes picked out by the pigeons; imagination, we are reminded, is nothing but the deeper apprehension of reality—the conventional valuations are blinded because they were already blind.

Cinderella, the sought-for image, is always there, anonymous, wherever man calls his thoughts like partners to the dance; she is found, and again lost amid her rival's blaze and din. But when despair or sleep has sent the baggages where they came from, he will find, in dreams, *one* slipper on the stair.

THAT SUMMER

HENRY TREECE

That summer the red may and the white may made
Glorious the garden-wall, and bees burdened
The golden air with their carrying, till it hung
Heavy, a canopy over our heads
As we lay on the lawn and dreamed our way
Through jungles of tangled marrow-shoots.
Foxgloves and campanulas swayed in the borders
And God bloomed over all, a benevolent sun.
Only the doves, like feathered augurs
Brooding in thatch, suspected time.

That year snow came in April and again
In May, and the pony died in his harness;
But in summer, under the white-washed trees
A girl in a white dress gave me an apple.
I fitted my teeth in the marks her teeth
Had made; so we were one. Then dusk
Moved slowly among the trees like a blue
Smoke at night, and I cried that joy
Could come so easily, for then I knew
It must break with as little warning. So

I learned then, among foxgloves and campanulas;
That summer flashed by in ten short years.

3

SAWDUST

MARY LAVIN

MATT Mageniss stood with his hands in his hind pockets, and looked down the road from the door of his public-house. The road was as straight as a counter, and white with dust, and Matt could see Christopher Winter the moment he came through the gates of his place and stepped into the dusty road.

'Good evening, Mr. Winter, sir!' said Matt. 'The dew is beginning to rise, I see. As I was just saying a few minutes ago to a friend of yours, it's a bad thing to be out of doors when the damp of the night is coming on!' Stepping aside from the doorway, Matt prepared to make passage-way for Mr. Winter, and even put out his hand to push open the door. But Christopher Winter shook his head. He was a thin man, with a sharp profile, and thin grey hair. His manner was cold, even patronising, and his clothes were excessively neat.

'I'm not coming in, Matt, thank you,' he said. 'I just took a walk up the road to see if I'd meet Goss Carty. I have a job I want done in the stables.'

Matt remained standing somewhat to the left of the door, but he entered into conversation with readiness.

'Goss Carty is your man,' he said. 'You couldn't get a better. But I didn't see him at all today. He didn't pass here, and he wouldn't pass without stepping inside. It's likely he'll be along later in the evening. It's early yet. You'll find he won't let the night pass without dropping in.'

As he said this, Matt still held the door back with his left hand while his right hand remained in his pocket.

'Would you care to step inside, sir, and wait for him?'

'No, thank you, Matt,' said Mr. Winter again, 'I don't think I will. I have a few things to attend to back at the house. If I don't meet him a little farther down the road, I'll probably turn back. And I can always come down later; it's such a short distance. What time do you expect he'll be here?'

'Well, I'd like to be able to oblige you, Mr. Winter, by giving you that information if it was in my power to do so, but as you know yourself, sir, Goss Carty isn't a man you'd like to set your watch by! It might happen it would be after nine o'clock before we'd see him, and for that again it might happen he'd be here before you're back at your own gate, sir. That's the way with Goss!' The publican sighed. 'He's a great man to work, but there is no knowing where or when you'll lay hands on him.'

'I know that,' said Mr. Winter. 'I know that. A most unreliable person.'

'How is it,' said Matt, letting the door slap shut at last and stepping a few paces farther into the road, 'how is it, I often ask myself, that those who can do a job properly are always the ones that you cannot get to lift a finger without wasting half a day coaxing and begging them to do it?' The publican fixed his eyes upon the ground while he meditated this problem, his hands once again thrust into his hind pockets.

'I'll do no begging or coaxing,' said Mr. Winter. 'Goss Carty is not the only man who——' Mr. Winter was obviously going to say something more, but at that moment he sneezed with a jerk that shook his whole frame, and brought the water to his eyes.

Matt pulled his hands out of his pockets in concern.

'That's the night air, sir!' he said. 'The worst thing a man could do is to stand in the night air.'

'There's no dew falling yet,' said Mr. Winter. 'It's quite bright still.' He put away his handkerchief and looked at the low gilt rim of the western sky.

Matt put his hands into his pockets again. But next minute Mr. Winter sneezed again, and had barely time to pull out his handkerchief before he sneezed a third time.

'Perhaps I had better step inside and wait for him,' he said.

'With pleasure!' said Matt, putting out his hand again, and holding back the door to let his customer step inside.

Although there were two large windows in the shop, it was exceedingly dark within because both windows were blocked up with cardboard cartons in the shape of bottles, gilded and labelled to resemble bottles of whisky. In front of these windows near the glass there were bags of flour and cartons of cereals, and plates filled up with currants and assortments of dried fruits, all of which, unlike the dummy bottles, were undoubtedly real because there was a generous sprinkling of grain and fruit all over the floor of the window, and as well as that there was an equally generous scattering of flies in rigid postures of death. Such light as there was in the shop fell only on the top shelves and lit up only the pale bottles with their cold glitter of spirits and their identical labels.

It is true the door had a glass panel that might have let in some light, but these panels had been pasted over with a commodity known familiarly as window-paper, which was intended to be an imitation of stained glass. The window-paper in this case was made in a design of diamond panes of alternating red and green, but of shades so dark that, although the design showed up lucently enough in the semi-darkness, the diamonds cast no rays of light beyond themselves. The loud wooden flooring was muted around the counters and door by a carpeting of sawdust that swallowed up the noise of the feet, and took to itself as well the slops from the counter, and the spits from the customers.

When Mr. Winter went into the shop there were only two other customers inside. They were local farmers.

Mr. Winter was more or less obliged to stand a drink all round, but although the drink made Mr. Winter himself more affable and familiar, the two local men could not forget the way Mr. Winter walked past them with a nod as he went up the road to church on a Sunday, his tall, proud-faced wife beside him with her indifferent gaze, and her green silk umbrella.

'Have another drink, men!' said Mr. Winter affably. His manner was not at all the same as it would be on a week-day if they went up to the house to ask for the loan of a harrow.

After a drink or two, Christopher Winter forgot a great many things besides his dignified manner, and on this occasion he soon forgot his reason for coming into the publican's premises, but as it happened, one of the farmers mentioned Goss Carty.

'Did you see him?' asked Mr. Winter, remembering all at once that he too had wanted to see him.

'I saw him going home across the fields an hour ago when I was coming up here,' said the fair-haired farmer who was the younger of the two men.

'He'll be back later, I understand?' said Mr. Winter, looking around at Matt who had taken a twig and was gathering in the sawdust that had been carried into the corners of the shop, to thicken the depth of it under the counter. It was getting near closing time, and Matt knew that if Mr. Winter had another drink or two he would be apt to get noisy.

'Oh, Goss will be back all right,' he said casually, as he gathered in more sawdust with a long stroke of the twig. 'Never fear, he'll be back all right.'

The two farmers exchanged glances. They stood for a while silently, as before, and then the younger fair-haired one made a remark casually.

'He had the evening paper under his arm when I met him.'

'Oh, he was probably taking home the doctor's paper,' said Matt hastily. 'He often calls for it, and drops it in to the doctor when he's passing the door.'

'That could be,' said the young farmer idly, as if not caring greatly one way or another. Then, as an afterthought, he spoke again. 'I saw the doctor in the village himself, though, an hour ago,' he said, but he laid no emphasis on the fact.

At this moment, the other farmer, an older and heavier man, with black hair and a sharp eye, altered his position. His feet had been crossed in front of him as he leant back on his elbows against the counter behind him, and now, instead of having the right foot crossed over the left, he crossed the left foot over the right.

'I was talking to him,' he said, and then he paused and stared at his crossed legs. 'He told me he bought a packet of

cornplasters this morning from a travelling man.'

'He's been bad with his corns for a long while back,' said the young fair-haired farmer, and shook his head. 'They're bad things, corns!' The two farmers stared at their own feet stretched out before them, and revolved their thoughts in their minds.

Mr. Winter, who had fallen out of the discussion, revolved his glass in his hand and stared at its gilt gleams.

Matt, however, was listening to every word, although he made it difficult for himself to hear what was said by the vigour with which he was thumping the brush on the floor. Apart from this thumping, there was silence for a few minutes. Then the young farmer spoke again.

'I hear those plasters are no use if you don't steep your feet for an hour before you put them on,' he said, and then he looked at his neighbour, communicating some small thought too subtle for speech.

Matt dropped the brush on the floor. He saw now the purpose of the conversation, but his face was bland.

'Don't worry,' he said. 'Goss will steep his feet. I recollect now that he mentioned something about his feet. "I'll be over tonight, Matt," he said to me, "after I steep my feet a while".'

The two farmers looked at each other again. The younger man shrugged his shoulders. Mr. Winter ordered another round of drinks.

The men looked into their glasses for a while before they lifted them and drank.

The talk was poor and gappy but the time spread out slowly, and still Goss did not arrive. Matt went out of the door at the back of the shop and came back carrying a shutter that dragged on the ground with a jarring noise. He went out of the door to put up the shutter over the window. The farmers took up their sticks that had lain along the counter, and wiped the wet from them on the broad of their sleeves. They nodded their heads to Mr. Winter and went out after Matt. Matt called back over his shoulder to Mr. Winter.

'Take your time, sir. There's a few minutes more. He may come yet, sir. No hurry!' and when he passed through the shop the second time on his way out with the second shutter, he called back over his shoulder again: 'If you care to take up your glass, sir, and step into the parlour with it, while you're waiting, you're heartily welcome. If Goss comes, it's likely he'll come to the hall-door if he sees the shop is shut.'

At ten o'clock Goss had not come, and the shutters were long up, but Mr. Winter had not gone into the parlour. Matt had lit a candle but he had lowered it into a biscuit tin to prevent the light from spreading beyond the counter. And Mr. Winter had exchanged money for drink with Matt so often that he was becoming a bit confused.

'Did I pay you for the last one, Magennis?' he asked.

'Do you mean the one in your hand or the one before that?' said Matt as he put out his hand to take the note that Mr. Winter was clumsily peeling from the notes he had taken out of his pocket.

The evening wore on.

'It's time you were thinking about going home, Mr. Winter,' said Matt at last. 'There's no hurry, of course, but they'll begin to be watching out for you up at the house.'

Mr. Winter drew together the remnants of his dignity.

'You forget yourself, Magennis,' he said. 'Is it for you, or for me, to say when I should go home to my own house?' He waved his glass, and the liquid splayed out angrily over his vest.

A woman's voice called out from the back of the shop.

'Take care would you vex him, Matt.'

'Mind your own business,' said Matt, without looking round.

'It's my business to keep the police from coming down on us for serving drinks after hours.'

'If that's the way you feel,' said Matt, 'send out one of your lazy lollops of sons to get him out of here. He can't put a foot straight under him.'

Mr. Winter, hearing the voices, but unable to catch what they said, turned from side to side, balancing unsteadily on his feet, and from the glass in his hand another slop of liquid poured down his vest.

The woman who had spoken came to the door at the back of the shop. She looked

out into the dim shop and caught sight of Mr. Winter.

'Why in the name of God did you let him lower all that drink into himself?' she said. 'He's not able to see the buttons on his coat.'

'Mind your own business,' said Matt again.

'Who is that, Magennis?' Mr. Winter called out thickly. 'Bring him in whoever he is! We're all friends here,' and leaning across the counter he threw one arm around Matt and raised his glass over his head with the other hand. 'All friends together!' he shouted.

'For God's sake shut him up,' said the woman, coming out further into the shop, and peering to see if the shutters were tightly bolted. But Mr. Winter had caught the glitter of the glass above his head and perceived that it was empty.

'Fill up, Matt,' he ordered, rocking slightly as he went towards the counter and let down his glass on the very edge.

'Take care would you give him another drop!' said the woman.

'Keep out of this, you!' said Matt.

Two hours later, when Matt and his wife, and their son, a sulky, pimply-faced youth, had succeeded in coaxing Mr. Winter out into the darkness with the minimum of noise and talk, the publican ventured to raise his own voice in a parting word to the youth.

'Leave him right up as far as the hall door,' he said, 'and ring the bell. Give a loud ring and leave him there. You needn't wait.'

When the youth and his muttering companion had shuffled off out of earshot, Magennis closed the shop door, and bolted it at the top and bottom. He went over to the till and took out a few notes and folded them. He counted the silver and he counted the coppers. Then he put the money into a black tin box and put the box behind a pile of soap cartons on a bottom shelf under the counter. He blew out the candle that had burnt down to a butt in the biscuit tin and made his way in the darkness to the door at the back that led into the kitchen. But Sophie Magennis had gone around the side of the house. Her feet splashed into a still pool near the back door, a pool that never dried up, winter or summer. At the door she stood for a few minutes. The night was still, and after a time she heard the sound of her son's knock on the door of Christopher Winter's house. She heard the sound of his feet running down the gravel path to the gate. From where she stood she could see the lights of the house shining through the trees, and after a time she saw the lights go out, one after the other, as if the same person had quenched them all, going from room to room; someone who cherished the great stone house, and set it to rest for the night in its shade of cypress and yew.

Sophie Magennis stared for another minute at the darkened building, faintly discernible still against the sky, that was brightening with the first light of the moon. And beauty spoke to her untutored soul in the only language it understood: the language of envy and covetousness. For another minute she stared at the lonely old house. Then she went back into her own house and opened the door that led into the shop. She pulled aside the soap cartons and took out the black tin box. She carefully counted the money in it, and when she put it back behind the cartons her lips were smiling.

FANTASY

Tree without a leaf I stand
Bird unfeathered cannot fly
I a beggar weep and cry
Not for coins but for a hand

To beg with. All my leaves are down
Feathers flown and hand wrenched off
Bird and tree and beggar grown
Nothing on account of love.

ELIZABETH JENNINGS

THE APPLICATION

HENRY CECIL

MR. JUSTICE BURPHAM sat in Death's waiting-room, looking at, but not reading, one of the many magazines provided for the use of customers. It was a copy of the *Law Journal*, opened at a page which contained an article referring to one of his recent judgments. Like most customers in this particular waiting-room, however, he was not really in a condition to take in the printed words. Patients of dentists and doctors are often in no better position. They are thinking too much of the interview which lies before them. The atmosphere in the ante-room of Death is even less conducive to reading, though ample material is provided for those who want it. Most people do what Mr. Justice Burpham was doing—put a magazine in front of them and don't read it.

He was one of the senior King's Bench judges and, as such, it had often been his duty to deal with applications by litigants for postponements of their cases. They were made on various grounds, though in most cases, whatever the ground put forward, the real reason for the application was, in the judge's belief, the fact that the solicitors on one side or the other had not sufficiently prepared their cases. He was often right, though not quite as often as he thought. Even when he was right, however, you might have thought that an adjournment would be granted in such cases so that the litigant should not be unnecessarily prejudiced by his solicitor's carelessness. But Mr. Justice Burpham thought very differently. Every experienced practitioner at the Bar knew that, if he wished to make a successful application for an adjournment before that particular judge, he would have to work very hard for it, and that it would be fatal to admit that the parties were not ready for trial. It is, of course, necessary that the lists of cases should not be allowed to get into disorder by too many applications for adjournments. As, however, solicitors are officers of the Court, there should be little difficulty in making them behave themselves properly without prejudicing the litigants, who, after all, are the people to be mainly considered in Courts of Justice. Of course, in a genuine case of illness, an adjournment could usually be obtained. Even then, however, the nature of the illness and its probable duration would be carefully scrutinised, and Mr. Justice Burpham would give the impression that he thought it somewhat contemptuous of anyone to be ill when he had a case in the list. Sometimes the real reason for the application for an adjournment was that counsel was engaged in another case. It might in some cases be very prejudicial for the litigant to change horses in midstream, but it was no use saying anything like this to Mr. Justice Burpham. If you were unwise enough to do so, he would merely congratulate you on being so busy and refuse the application. It was, in fact, this judge's normal practice in refusing these applications (which he seemed to do with alacrity and some unexplained pleasure)

to indulge in some heavy sarcasm which would sometimes produce titters from those who were not at the moment affected by it.

As Mr. Justice Burpham sat in the waiting-room, many thoughts raced through his mind, but the most important of these was that he would like to live a little longer. As he was considering regretfully the many delights which life yet held for him, the door of the waiting-room opened and Death walked in and asked if he was ready. Almost instinctively the judge said: 'Would it be possible, my Lord, to apply for a short postponement?'

'On what grounds?'

'Quite frankly, my Lord, I am not yet ready.'

'Not ready, Sir George? Surely you have had enough warning? Your case has been in my list for months, not to say for years.'

'I must admit, my Lord, that I have known that I have had a weak heart for a long time and that this might happen to me, but now that it has happened, it seems so terribly sudden.'

'Shouldn't you have thought of that before, Sir George? I seem to recollect that in similar applications made to you that is the sort of answer you have given the applicant.'

'Perhaps I was wrong sometimes, my Lord.'

'That may well be, Sir George. But is it not rather late to have discovered that? What redress have the unfortunate litigants whose applications for postponements were refused?'

The judge was silent.

'Well, then, what other grounds have you for this adjournment of your case?'

'Quite frankly, my Lord,' said the judge, 'I enjoy my life and would like some more of it.'

'That is an unusually honest answer, Sir George. Do you think that, if I grant your application, you might in the future be more ready to grant other people's?'

'Oh, my Lord, I feel sure of it.'

'Well, Sir George, in view of the frankness which you have shown in making your application, and in particular in view of the fact that you have candidly admitted that there are no grounds whatever for my granting it, I will postpone the hearing of your case for the moment. You may go. Good morning.'

As in a dream, the judge bowed himself out and gradually came back through unconsciousness to life and, after a lengthy period of convalescence, to his duties.

Shortly after his return to work, the judge was about to hear applications for adjournments. Suddenly a young member of the Bar, wholly inexperienced in these matters (and, indeed, in almost every other matter connected with the practice of the law), out of his turn (because it is customary for such applications to be made in order of seniority) leapt to his feet and, in a very young man's voice, loud and clear, asked to be allowed to mention the case of Brown v. Smith. The judge looked along the row of more senior barristers waiting to make their applications and, pausing only to remark, 'There seems to be a dearth of applications this morning', gave the young man leave to mention Brown v. Smith.

'My Lord, in that case I have an application that it should stand out of the list for one month.'

'Upon what grounds?'

'The best possible grounds, my Lord; the case is not ready for trial.'

The more senior members of the Bar waited, smiling like schoolboys, for the storm to break.

The judge licked his lips. But, just as he was about to reduce the young man to a state of stuttering confusion, he suddenly remembered his own application for an adjournment and the reprieve which frankness had brought him.

'Well, Mr.—, Mr.—,' (he looked at the slip of paper containing the young man's name), 'Mr. Forsyth, it is certainly refreshing to have to consider such an honest application.'

The Bar looked puzzled but assumed that heavy sarcasm was about to be brought into play. They never learned how wrong they were. The judge had every intention of granting the young man's application. Suddenly, however, he felt a dreadful pain tearing at his heart and he just had time to reverse his intention and to refuse the application before he expired.

MALTA'S GREAT MONTH

HENRY BAERLEIN

A SERMON was preached in the Anglican cathedral of Malta a few years ago in the course of which Dr. Nicholls, the chancellor, expressed his opinion that St. Paul, contrary to the general belief, did not suffer shipwreck on the coast of Malta in February of the year A.D. 58. Dr. Nicholls pointed out that voyages were not then undertaken in the months of winter when a tempest, which a vessel of that period could not face, might suddenly arise. But it has been the custom in Malta to regard 10 February as the day of the shipwreck; and the Maltese will continue to do so.

Regardless of all that Malta has achieved in other months, the Great Siege of 1565 when she defied the Sultan Suleiman the Magnificent and—what is most in our memory—the gallant resistance in the last war, February will always be honoured as Malta's great month. Not much attention is paid to the arguments of Dr. Nicholls and his school; they are either ignored or are described as merely speculations. And, after all, is it not possible that, as the ship had on board an important personage who was being taken to Rome for his trial, the captain had been urged to get him there without delay? Many another captain would, after the wreck of his ship, have turned in wrath on his innocent passenger; but this captain—to whom as yet insufficient honour has been paid and now it is too late for the naval historians to discover his name—this captain permitted Paul to live for a time on shore, a convenient catacomb at Rabat, the high-lying old capital, having been placed at his disposal, and we are not told that the captain interfered at all when the man for whose ultimate arrival in Rome he was responsible began to convert the islanders, a proceeding which might have been resented with violence by some of them.

But Paul was sowing on fruitful soil and the Church has had no congregations more devoted to her than the Maltese. Villages have vied with one another in the building of great churches; one of them, Musta, has a church with the third largest dome in Europe. This came about because, when it was decided to supersede the old church with a new one, it was constructed around and enclosing its predecessor, very much like the wooden palace of the last Queen of Madagascar, around which a more dignified stone structure was erected. But in Madagascar the old wooden palace remained intact, while at Musta, when the new church had been completed after thirty years in 1863, the old building was levelled in eight days.

Religion dominates a Maltese house—no woman cuts a loaf of bread without first making the Sign of the Cross upon it with her forefinger or the knife. If the loaf should fall to the ground, she will kiss it by way of asking its pardon. On a Friday the Maltese will not laugh too heartily, because the memory of the Crucifixion should make all of us sad. Safety first, says the Maltese mother, who makes the Sign of the Cross in front of her baby's mouth when it yawns, so that evil spirits be kept away.

It is indeed appropriate that the Maltese should be so preoccupied with religion, for they inhabit an island which in the days of their pre-Christian ancestors resembled in its sanctity the Rock of Cashel in Tipperary. There was a time when Africa was joined by a strip of land to Europe, the elephant and hippopotamus wandering up from the south, bears, deer and foxes from the north. Their bones have been discovered in the caves of Malta which was then the summit of a hill, and it was thousands of years before a human bone

was deposited. But when man did finally arrive in Malta, it is most probable that he came from the north of Africa; the theory that human life in Malta had a Phoenician *origin*[1] is no longer maintained by the archaeologists. These pre-historic men looked upon the hill of Malta as holy ground, and there they assembled in worship at the temples of Hagar Qim and Mnajdra, smaller sisters of Stonehenge, and in the Hal Saflieni Hypogeum, the finest underground neolithic temple in the world. One of the world's wonders, it served not only as a temple but as a granary, and as one descends the winding steps, one has to admire the ingenuity of those people, for the last few steps to the bottom are situated at an acute angle to the others, so that an enemy rushing down in the darkness would fall to the bottom, and before he could rise, he would be attacked and probably beaten to death. Or he might be selected to assist his captors in the religious observances, for which the innermost chamber is furnished with a stone table, while in the rock behind it are two excavations where the victim's hands would be imprisoned behind his back.

In the succeeding centuries Malta came under many different overlords—Carthaginians, Romans, Byzantines, Arabs, Normans, Aragonese and then the Knights of St. John, to whom, when they were expelled by Suleiman from Rhodes, the Emperor Charles V entrusted the defence of Malta. The English knights played a less prominent part than those of France, Provence, Aragon, Castile, Portugal or Bavaria, but it fell to the lot of an English knight, Sir William Weston, to command the good ship St. Anne in which De L'Isle Adam, one of the most famous of the Grand Masters, sailed to Malta from Rhodes. When the next Grand Master, La Valette, built his new city as soon as the repulse of the Turks left him free to do so, his Latin Secretary was an English knight, Sir Oliver Starkey.

The Knights, who as a rule were the younger sons of noble families, observed for a time the rules of temperance and chastity. But gradually a more lax fashion prevailed, while the natives of the island were treated with less and less kindliness. No native Maltese was eligible for admission into the ranks of the Knights, so that when a Maltese woman was about to give birth to a child she would, if she or her husband had social ambitions, go out to sea in a Provençal, Portuguese or Aragonese ship and, when beyond territorial waters, produce her child.

In June 1798 a French fleet of 472 war vessels advanced on Malta, and Napoleon wrote to von Hompesch, the only German who had ever been Grand Master, requesting that the whole fleet might enter the harbour for the purpose of taking in water. Von Hompesch pointed out that in time of war not more than four armed vessels could be admitted simultaneously. 'They deny us water!' cried Napoleon in a rage. 'We shall get it in spite of them!' The French occupied the island, but there followed Nelson's victory at Aboukir and the rising of the Maltese against the French who were engaged in looting the churches. The Maltese placed themselves under the protection of Ferdinand IV, the King of Naples and Sicily; with French ships everywhere the delegation found it difficult to get away, but they ultimately succeeded in sailing from St. Paul's Bay unseen by the French, and after six days they reached Naples.

It is surprising that the next Grand Master of the Order of St. John—who, however, did not come to Malta—was a Russian, no less a person than the Czar Paul, the son and successor of Catherine the Great. But Russia had for some generations been taking an interest in the strategically situated island, for Peter the Great was quick to appreciate how valuable a base Malta could be for his operations against the Turks, and how useful the Order's experience of warfare at sea would be to his infant Navy. Then Catherine the Great persuaded Grand Master Pinto to allow Russian naval officers to be trained in the Order's ships and the Grand Master obligingly sent two of his Bailiffs to reorganise her Baltic fleet for her war with Sweden.

Nelson's dispatches to the Cabinet in London were not enthusiastic in advocating the possession of Malta, and it may be that in those days of sailing ships he had in

[1] The Maltese claim that they are of mixed Phoenician origin

mind other harbours more useful than Malta's Grand Harbour. It may also be that with Sir William Hamilton, the British Envoy to King Ferdinand, who had become Malta's suzerain, on very friendly terms with that monarch, Nelson was reluctant to offend Sir William more than had already been the case.

But when a delegation of Maltese went to London, praying for inclusion in the British Empire, the first Governor was Nelson's old comrade, Sir Alexander Ball, who made himself so beloved by the people that it was said every house had on its walls two pictures, one of the Virgin and Child, and one of Sir Alexander. For a time the poet Coleridge was Sir Alexander's secretary. 'If,' said the Governor, 'I were a rich man, I would willingly pay Coleridge £500 a year if he would dine with me twice a week, for his conversation is enchanting.'

Economically the British connection has been of great service to the Maltese, for the Royal Dockyard has been almost the only employer of industrial labour. Indeed it was owing to the non-employment of numbers of men, when a few months ago various 'economies' were introduced by the Admiralty, that a political crisis occurred, with a split in the Labour Government.

But if the British authorities provided the Maltese with the material means of existence, they were less assiduous in leading them along the paths of education. Until just after the Second World War a Maltese parent was not obliged to send his child to school, although if he had begun to do so and then omitted to continue in this course, he was usually fined half a crown. Today education is compulsory, but among the older part of the population illiteracy is pretty general; for that reason the buses which ply to all parts of the island are of different colours, so that a passenger can place himself in the one that makes for his destination. These buses, by the way, have an entrance that is inconveniently narrow for the faldetta, a sort of hat combined with umbrella, constructed on a flexible cardboard and whalebone foundation, which is still worn by many of the older women. It has been said that this contraption was introduced by Napoleon in order to help the women to avoid the embarrassing attentions of his soldiery. But the faldetta was in use as early as the fifteenth century.

These little buses have now entirely taken the place of the railway which was brought out—lock, stock and barrel—from a disused line in the Isle of Wight.

There are no railways, steel or coal to be nationalised in Malta, so that other activities have to undergo that process. There is a national pawnbroking business and a national lottery, the revenue of which amounts to over £50,000 a year. There is likewise the Redemption Fund which dates from the time when the Barbary pirates had to be paid before they would release the Knights (for a larger sum) or the inferior persons whom they had captured (for a smaller payment). This fund is nowadays devoted to other purposes. I hope that some of it will be used for the green lizards of Filfla. To the south of Malta there rises from the sea this rock which the Navy has for gunnery practice, so that eventually one presumes it will be shot away. But naturalists assert that the green lizard of Filfla is unique in the world—and what a pity it would be if no other home is found for it.

At a distance of four miles from Malta is Gozo, the sister-island, one-third of Malta in size, but more fertile, especially in spring when, all green and purple, it provides wheat and clover, the latter for the cattle which are brought from Tunis and fattened up in Gozo for the Maltese market. Donkeys, mules and horses can be seen once a year scampering along the local racecourse, which is the asphalt road strewn with sand, from Maggiar, the little port, to the capital—whose name is also Rabat—four miles away. The beautiful Renaissance houses of Rabat are built of a yellowish stone, and elsewhere in Gozo are the famous hardstone quarries from which hundreds of tons have been exported to Liverpool for the new Roman Catholic cathedral. Life is pleasant in Gozo, where old men and women of eighty and ninety are quite common, and at certain seasons these veterans work in the fields throughout the night. The flowers of spring and summer, daffodils and roses, bloom simultaneously, while in the extreme west is the

Fungus Rock, covered by a shrub that is now no longer used, but which in other days was jealously protected against all intruders, as it was alleged to be a sovereign remedy against dysentery and haemorrhages of all sorts and was known to the Arabs as 'the treasure of drugs'.

Gozo's story goes much further back than Malta's. We read in the fifth book of the Odyssey that Calypso's cave was situated there, and it is still pointed out by enthusiastic taxi-drivers who are, as a rule, returned emigrants from America, for the Gozitan does not subdivide his farm, but causes his younger sons to seek their fortune in Malta or elsewhere. Prudent, industrious and tenacious, they are regarded as the Scots of the archipelago. Knock at the door of a Gozitan and ask the householder if he is Mr. So-and-so. Before he knows your business, he will not reply.

While the whole neighbourhood of the Grand Harbour of Valetta had to endure the Italian and German air bombardment, the old capital of Malta, a few miles away, Mdina (or Rabat), was more fortunate. One of the finest of Mdina's ancient palaces is that of the late Baroness d'Amico Inguanez, who represented the Maltese Nobility at two coronations in London. In her youth she was of such striking beauty that Queen Victoria, apprehensive of the fascination she might exercise over the midshipman who became King George V, expressed the desire that this lovely girl should not often be seen. Another old Maltese lady has told me that her parents received a similar request regarding herself. The two girls were not on the best of terms, nor did they in the years that followed love each other to excess. But when, in the Second World War, the fine town house in Valetta of the second old lady was destroyed, her erstwhile rival insisted that she should come up to Mdina and spend the rest of her life under that roof. The Baroness lived in considerable state with a retinue of female servants arrayed in a striking red uniform. Opening out of one of the salons of her house there is an oratory only just large enough for three persons and there she was married to her English husband, an army officer, by whom she had no children, so that she was succeeded by her nephew.

A member of the Maltese Nobility on his mother's side was the late Lord Strickland. From his mother he inherited the title of Count della Catena. He left the island at the age of seven to go to school in England and, after many years in the service of the Colonial Office, in the West Indies, and as Governor of New South Wales, he returned to Malta and found it not so easy, he told me, to re-acquire the Maltese language. This was very necessary, as he was planning to enter the public life of the island, and in due course he became Prime Minister. It used to be asserted by the pro-Italian party that Maltese is an Italian dialect. The absurdity of this statement will be seen from a perusal of the Lord's Prayer:

Missierna li inti fis-smewwiet
    Jitqaddes ismek—
Tigi saltnatek,
Ikum li trid Int, kif fio-semazhekda fl-art.

To the uninstructed eye the system of literation, which was chosen from fifteen competing systems, possesses an appearance that is markedly eccentric.

However, with his almost fantastic energy, Lord Strickland acquired quite enough proficiency in the language, which is of Phoenician and Semitic origin, to make public speeches. It was for many years the custom of the British authorities in Malta to use Italian, which not only did they find easier to learn than Maltese, but they assumed it was understood by the islanders. One may find in the Museum proclamations issued in Italian, with no Maltese and not even an English translation. There came a considerable outcry when Joseph Chamberlain, as Colonial Secretary, decided that English and Maltese were in future to be the official languages. This outcry was produced by the Church and the lawyers, the latter because Italian was the language of the Courts, while the Vatican continued to send its decisions to Malta in a language which the village priest was always compelled to translate to his congregation. The Nobles and the legal class were, at least until 1939, attracted to the Italian language and culture.

The party which Lord Strickland founded and led to power under the 1921

Constitution was known as the Constitutional party. For reasons unnecessary to recall in detail, the 1921 Constitution was suspended in 1930 owing to a persistent deadlock between Lord Strickland's Ministry and the Holy See, whose instructions to Maltese voters he, albeit himelf a devout Roman Catholic, could not tolerate. The Constitution was suspended again in 1933, on that occasion owing to the 'Nationalist' or pro-Italian party, then in office, persisting, in the face of warnings, in taking a line contrary to the policy of the Imperial Government as regards the use of the Italian language and for other reasons. Self-government then remained in abeyance until restored by a new Constitution promulgated in 1947. At the 1947 elections Lord Strickland's party, which had been dissolved, found themselves with two alternatives, neither of which they particularly relished. One was to vote for the Nationalists, whose co-leader was Dr. Mizzi, the veteran pro-Italian mainly responsible for the policies that led to the suspension of self-government in 1933 and one of the very few Maltese (he is half Italian by birth) whom it was found necessary to intern in East Africa during the last war. The other alternative, which many perforce adopted, was to vote for Labour, then untried in Malta, and an unknown quantity. So in 1947 the Labour Party for the first time took office, under Dr. Boffa. Dr. Boffa was also the only member of his Cabinet with previous grounding in public life.

No one is better informed and more lucidly able to depict his knowledge of Maltese affairs than Sir Harry Luke who for many years was Lieutenant-Governor. He points out that the economic situation of Malta after the Second World War affords an all too complete example of the vicious circle. The Maltese archipelago is one of the most densely-populated geographical units in the world, with over two thousand five hundred people to the square mile. The proportion of its built-up area to the area under cultivation is probably uniquely high, and it can feed itself for only about six weeks of the year. Its industries are still largely in the formative stage and can never be great; its major 'industry', so to speak, is His Majesty's Dockyard. After the First World War the British Mediterranean Fleet based on Malta was the greatest single naval force then in existence; after the Second World War the strength of the Mediterranean Fleet was, alas, a very different one. But whereas the British Navy had been reduced, and with it the scope for employment in the Dockyard, the already overdense population of Malta had continued to increase—no Maltese woman thinks she has done her duty until she has produced twelve or fourteen children. Thus it has seemed no easier to bridge the gap between the employment sought and the employment available in the Dockyard than to bridge the sterling-dollar one. It was under the stress created by the problem of filling that gap that an extremist element in Dr. Boffa's Ministry issued the egregious 'ultimatum' which threatened, if full satisfaction were not afforded by the Imperial Government, to offer Malta to 'the United States or any other major country'.

This document can rightly be called egregious, not only because of its tactical ineptitude, not to say childishness. It is equally so because it is obviously *ultra vires* for the Maltese Ministry, which derives its power solely from the 1947 Constitution, to hawk around the Colony's allegiance until it finds the highest bidder.

Dr. Boffa got his vote of confidence in the Chamber against the votes of the Nationalists and the abstention of the rebels of his own party: but a fortnight later, in October 1949, a mass meeting composed of the more extreme section of those who voted the Labour Party into office in 1947 carried by 244 votes to 141 a vote of censure on him both as Leader of the Party and as Head of the Ministry, proposed by his ex-colleague Mr. Mintoff, the leader of the rebels.

The result of this split in the Labour ranks was that, at the General Election in 1950, the two Labour sections obtained eleven deputies each, while the Nationalists secured twelve. The Governor therefore invited Dr. Mizzi to form a Cabinet.

The first thing he did, knowing that he had a minority Government, was to approach the other Parties with whom he

might form a Coalition, but his various attempts were unsuccessful, although the Constitutionalist Party—two of its four deputies are daughters of its founder Lord Strickland—pledged itself to support him in non-contentious matters and to help in passing a budget based on the recommendations made by Sir George Schuster, who visited the island in the late spring and early summer of 1950. Retrenchments in several directions were in his programme, while he added that Malta would still require assistance from Great Britain. The British Government has allocated to Malta £1,500,000, spread over five years, and it is hoped that, with this aid, Malta will ultimately become self-sufficient.

This passing collaboration of the Constitutionalist Party with Dr. Mizzi's Nationalists still leaves the latter in a precarious position. Twice Dr. Mizzi has been defeated on the motion for adjournment, the Opposition putting forward an amendment to adjourn *sine die*; and when, towards the end of November, the Speaker convened the House for the urgent matter of the passing of the budget, he himself voted with those two Parties; and with the support of two members of the Mintoff Party who crossed the floor of the House and one Boffa man who acted in a similar fashion, the budget was passed by the narrowest majority. Since it has been in office, the Nationalist Government has introduced no bills and thus cannot be said to have done active good or bad in this direction.

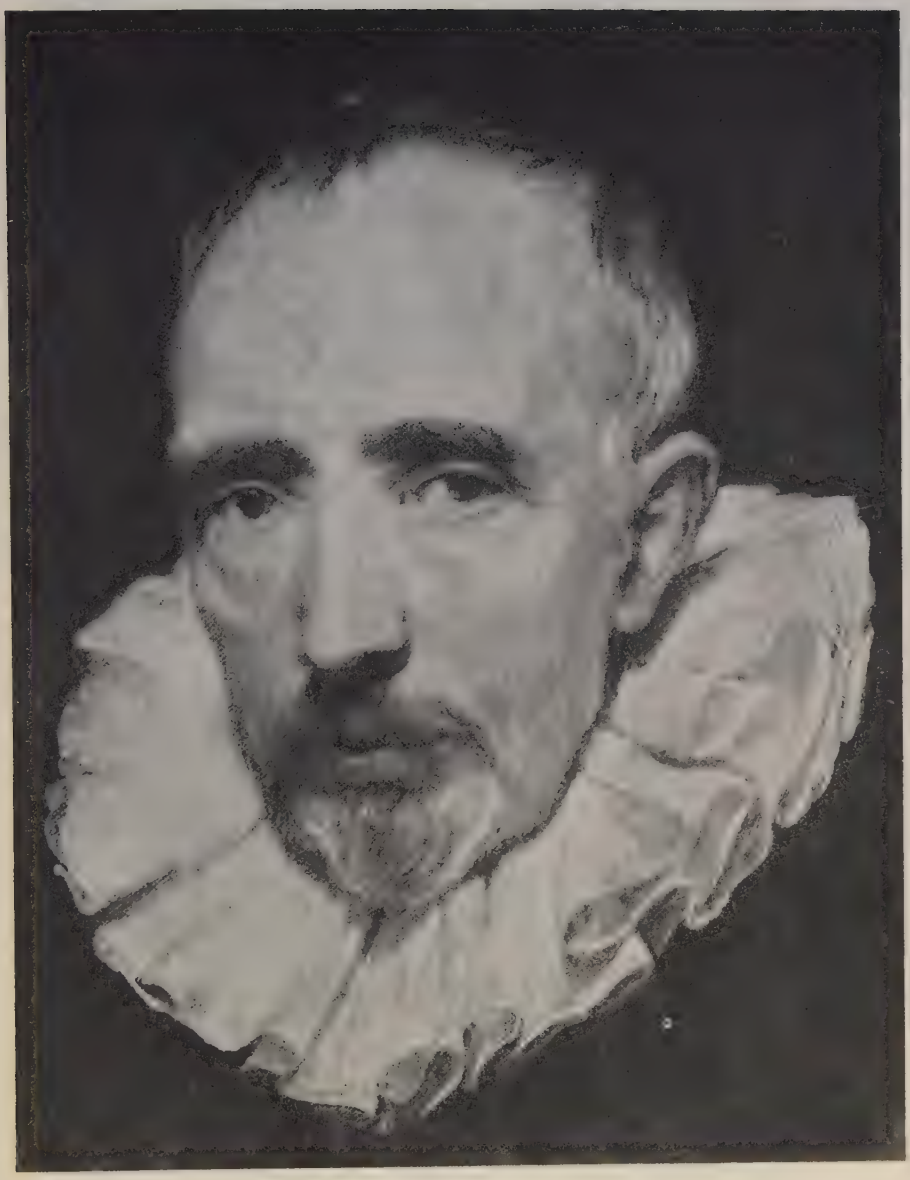
Dr. Mizzi died recently, at the age of sixty-eight, and was succeeded by Dr. Borg Olivier, who was Minister of Education and also Minister of Works and Reconstruction. Dr. Olivier, a small, thin man, is a fine orator and is regarded as a live wire. He is just over forty years of age and thus was too young to be involved in Mizzi's pro-Italian activities which led to his conviction in 1917 and his internment during the Second World War.

It is thought by competent observers that in the event of another General Election both the Nationalist and the Constitutionalist Parties would slightly increase their numbers. But, of course, a good deal depends on whether the personal rivalry between Dr. Boffa, the veteran Labour leader, and the much younger Mr. Mintoff can be sufficiently bridged for them to work in harmony. It is thought by some that, if this comes about, the reunited Labour Party will lose a certain amount of support, owing to the fear felt by many of the voters that Mr. Mintoff would give the Party a severe swing to the left. It is interesting, by the way, to notice that, while he acquired his engineering and architectural knowledge in Malta, he became an M.A. at Oxford where he was a Rhodes scholar; and his wife comes of an old Tory family in England.

The Admiralty has now ceased to dismiss its employees at the Dockyard, but the number of unemployed, which reached the figure of 2,000, is still about 1,500. They receive no Government support, but in Malta family ties are very strong and they are all cared for. It is obvious that the problem can only be solved by emigration or by having less children. Emigration stopped, naturally, in the war, but in the last eighteen months some 10,000 have left the island, most of them making for Australia; the Malta Government has itself chartered ships to take them. It would like to send 12,000 a year for the next four or five years.

'*Onward! Put your hand to the work*' had been De L'Isle Adam's motto and it has been since then the motto of the Maltese.

3



Van Dyck CORNELIUS VAN DER GEEST AFTER CLEANING

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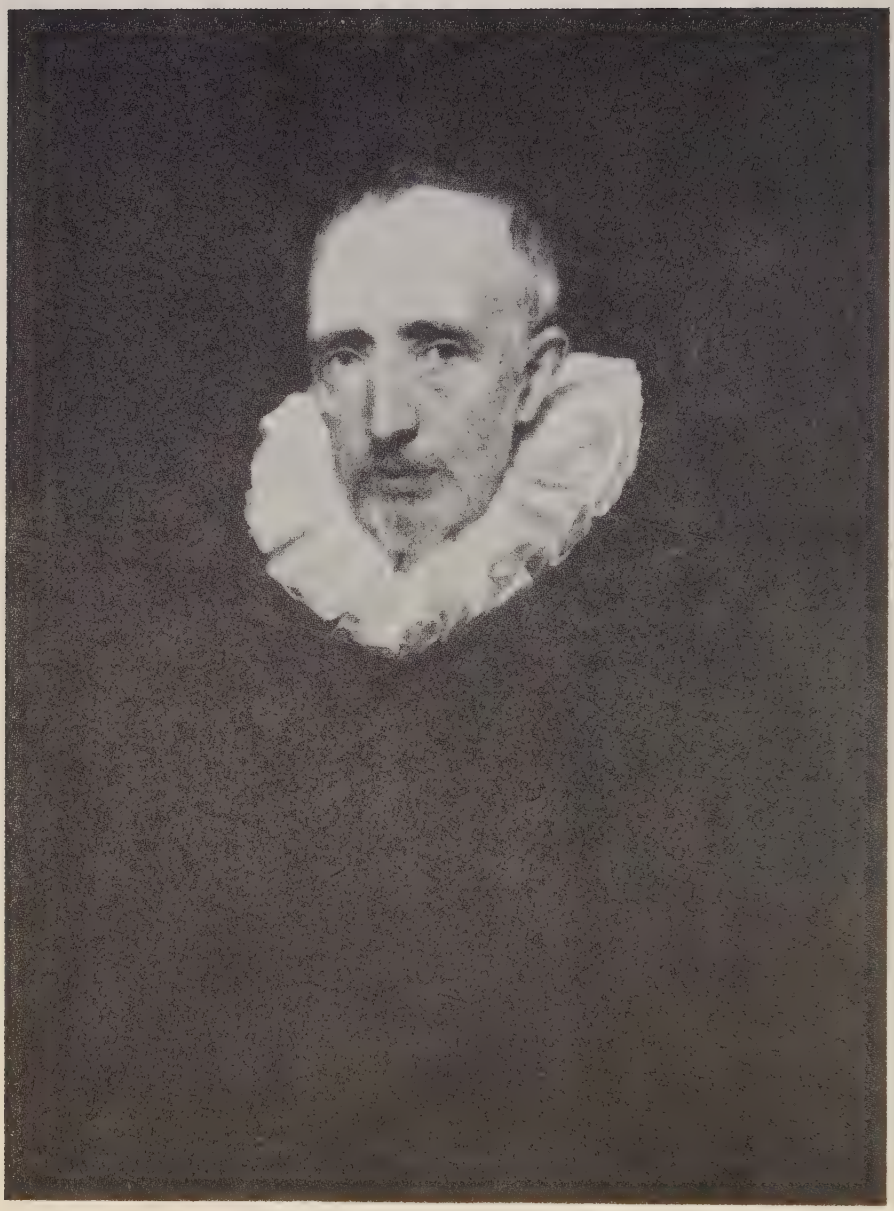

BEFORE CLEANING

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VAN DYCK'S
CORNELIUS VAN DER GEEST

BERTRAM NICHOLLS

THE picture here reproduced will never be seen again. It has long been greatly admired as a fine and dignified example of male portraiture, 'which,' says Sir Charles Holmes, 'ever since the foundation of the Gallery has enjoyed an immense and well merited popularity with the students.'[1] And not with the students alone. It has stood well above criticism all these years. In its gravity and simplicity it was quite free from that more than courtly elegance which in much of Van Dyck's work is to some tastes excessive. The head seemed well placed, well related to the whole. It was in fine condition, that is to say, it had to just the right degree that patina of age formerly so highly valued, and now, it would appear, so much despised. It was not dark, or Sir Charles Holmes would hardly have used the words, ' . . . so forceful is the relief of the head and the white ruff . . .'[1] and it was without those cold blues that the present Director of the National Gallery finds so distasteful when tempered by glazes or reduced by old varnish.

However, it was not forceful enough. In the interests of science perhaps, rather than of art, the picture was cleaned and submitted to an X-ray examination, and it was discovered that an original panel, measuring some 15″ × 13″, and containing only the head and ruff and a small area of background, had been skilfully enlarged to the size we know, and the rest of the picture added. This addition was judged to be a forgery, and 'appears to have been done in the eighteenth century.'[2] It must be allowed that whoever did it forged an immense amount of aesthetic satisfaction for a very large number of people 'ever since the foundation of the Gallery'.

On the assumption that these conjectures are well founded, it is here submitted that the proper course would have been to re-hang the picture exactly as it was, with a simple explanatory tablet, not to destroy something, whatever its origin, that has been prized as a national treasure by many generations of men. A much more drastic course was chosen. Only the original small panel has been 'completely cleaned',[2] 'where the forger rubbed away Van Dyck's paint on the margin of the small panel . . . this has been retouched'[2]; and the forged area has been hidden by a massive frame monstrously out of proportion to what it contains. 'Retouched' is perhaps rather a delicate word to carry such a weight of meaning, for, if we may judge from the published photograph, the major part of the background has been repainted. No forgery here. Only an honest attempt by the restorer to make the picture look as much as possible like what he thought Van Dyck intended. Presumably the aim was authenticity; and, cleaned and patched as it is, the picture has some degree of authenticity. It is unlikely to command the admiration it has received since 1824, but it has acquired a new historical interest. The history of painting, however, is one thing; fine painting is another. Both are of great value and interest, but the interest of the former is a secondary interest; it has its source in the pictures themselves. In the present instance the relative importance of these interests has been reversed. We have lost a picture long greatly prized, though of unorthodox origin, and gained a picture which throws a little faint light on a particular painter's output. Both are thought to be, in part at least, the work of Van Dyck.

[1] C. J. Holmes. The National Gallery. Vol. 2. [2] *The Times* 12 June 1950

MARGARET CROSLAND

JANUS

A POEM FOR MY OWN BIRTHDAY

The two-faced god is always on my road,
milestone of the winter,
bleak and realistic,
January.
In a sense it is useful to see both sides,
past and future one continuous path,
with no eagerness, no remorse,
and the present easily dealt with.
I personally envy him much.

God of beginning things, god of alarm clocks and bedroom doors,
protect us.
Protect us as we dress and go to work.
Bless our divided heart, our gay and grim,
the banging of desks, the lost assignments.
Most of all, bless me,
born under the sign of twins,
and thus your natural daughter.
I too must be always divided,
dressed always in green shot silk,
a mirrored face in every window,
condemned to a life of choice or chance,
a coin-tossed life of take-your-pick,
a moonlit walk or a gin at the pub.

No one shall help me decide,
not my psychiatrist,
not even my uncle in heaven,
Mercury, playful planet,
presiding at my birth, on June the seventeenth.

God of all the spivs, quacks and telegraphists,
make me at least rich, and of course, quickly.
For only with your help has Janus survived,
only on coins can we see this head,
tossed on the table, counted for a slave;
something to do with a two-man pact,
preserving each other's reputation,
and of course, mine.

Janus geminus, twin-like protector,
open the doors to us, all the doors of pubs and publishers,
take of Mercury, my favourite uncle,
always drunk on Wednesday night.
Start a new religion, a new Board of Trade,
pay off the soldiers, and let the doors
always be shut in your temple of peace.

LETTERS

GUNPOWDER PLOT

SIR,

That the whole truth about the Gunpowder Plot may never be revealed, that there are loose ends in the known story, that Cecil played a deep and devious game —none of this is new or strange. Nor does it entitle your contributor (*World Review*, November 1950) to attempt to substitute a wholly unwarranted version.

His propositions are:

(1) *That the case was founded on two confessions, one of which (Winter's) was forged.* The allegation of forgery is an old Jesuit hare started by a Father Gerard (not he of the plot) in 1897 and promptly dispatched by S. R. Gardiner (the greatest authority on the period). If Mr. Williamson has new evidence, he should let us hear it. (If not, then to state categorically that Winter's confession was forged suggests either unfamiliarity with Gardiner or lack of candour.)

(2) *That one of the main concerns of Government was to implicate the Jesuits and the whole body of the Catholics.* Yet in the official contemporary story of the plot ('The King's Book'), in Cecil's letter of 9 Nov. to the English Ambassador in Spain, in Fawkes' confession 'extracted under severe and repeated torture', in Winter's 'forged' confession—in none of these is there a hint of Jesuit responsibility or general Catholic support. 'The King's Book' is at pains to say: 'Notwithstanding of their (the conspirators) fair shews and pretences of their Catholic cause, no creature through all the country would once so much as give them, willingly, a cup of drink or any sort of comfort or support.' Winter's confession exonerated Sir William Stanley (a notorious traitor on whose career Mr. Williamson might ponder if he wishes to understand Government suspicion of Catholics) whom Cecil would certainly have liked to incriminate and for whose surrender he unsuccessfully negotiated with Spain. The Machiavellian Cecil seems to have been a singularly inept propagandist.

The HANOVER GALLERY

MARCH 13—APRIL 7
Recent Paintings by
VICTOR BRAUNER
and
JEAN HUGO

*

APRIL 10—MAY 5
Recent Paintings by
JEAN HELION
Sculpture by
WOTRUBA

*

MAY 8—JUNE 9
The Sculpture of
MARINO MARINI

*

JUNE 12—
THROUGH SUMMER
GRAHAM SUTHERLAND

32A ST. GEORGE STREET
LONDON, W.1
Mayfair 0296

(3) *That the Jesuits 'strained every nerve to prevent the plot as soon as they heard of it.'* The teaching of the Jesuits on tyrannicide cannot here be discussed. Of those connected with the plot, Gerard may be given the benefit of a 'not proven' verdict. Garnet, spared the torture in spite of James' 'temperamental sadism', nevertheless proved a clumsy equivocator, fell victim to an elementary ruse of Cecil's, and admitted in court 'that after Greenway (another Jesuit) had told him what it was Catesby intended, and that he called to mind what Catesby had said to him at his first breaking with him in general terms, his soul was troubled with mislike of that particular, and he was loth to hear any more of it.' 'Strained every nerve . . .!' There is a sufficiency of evidence that Greenway was guilty. Even the Catholic Lingard states without qualification that Garnet was guilty of misprision of treason.

(4) *That the plot was a Government 'frame-up'.* We know, he says, that the Babington plot was a frame-up. This can only mean Government instigated; if so, our greatest living Elizabethan authority, Professor J. E. Neale, seems to remain in surprising ignorance. 'The technique employed was to sow in the minds of desperate men . . .' What shred of evidence has he for this? And in what dark place that has eluded the recognised authorities will 'the student find that they (the Government) had been aware of it (the plot) for eighteen months', i.e since its inception?

(5) *That this Government* 'propaganda story' has *found its way into all history books.* Neither all, nor most, if indeed any, state or imply what Mr. Williamson argues is the essence of the Government case—Jesuit inspiration and general Catholic support of the plot. It is usual to represent the Catholic masses as receiving the news with horror and consternation. The traditional history-book story may be imperfect. It bears nevertheless a markedly closer relation to historical truth than the interpretation your contributor would foist on us.

Yours, etc.,

EDWARD RUDGLEY

Twickenham.

HUGH ROSS WILLIAMSON writes:

To answer Mr. Rudgley in detail would require so long an article that I must content myself with referring him to my forthcoming book *The Gunpowder Plot*, in which all his points are met in documented detail. He will, I hope, excuse me if my answers here are somewhat short and categorical.

1. (*a*) Gardiner's *What the Gunpowder Plot Was* is an inaccurate, and in some places dishonest, work which was demolished by Fr. Gerard's *The Gunpowder Plot and the Gunpowder Plotters* and *Thomas Winter's Confession* (in which he prints facsimiles which leave no doubt of forgery).

(*b*) I did produce new evidence of forgery in an article in *The Month* for October 1950.

2. This is so contrary to facts which can be found merely by studying the State Papers of the time, as well as accounts of the trials, that there is nothing to say, except to point out that in the quotation from *The King's Book*, 'country' refers specifically to the Warwickshire and Worcestershire countryside, where the people refused to rise in rebellion after the plot had failed; and that, as Stanley was a naturalised Spaniard, owing allegiance to the King of Spain, he can hardly be called a 'notorious traitor' because he implemented that allegiance.

3. (*a*) There is no reason to suppose that Fr. Garnet was not tortured.

(*b*) A reading of Garnet's letters to his superiors and his recorded conversations with his fellow-Jesuits (he fears, for example, that he will be 'sent to the galleys' for failing to prevent the 'stirs') makes it quite clear that the Jesuits did 'strain every nerve' to carry out the Papal policy and prevent any plots or disturbances. The one thing they did not, and could not, do was to break the seal of confession, under which, alone, they knew of the Gunpowder Plot. The quotation which Mr. Rudgley gives refers to Fr. Tesimond (Greenway) telling Fr. Garnet of it *in confession*, so that, however much or little he heard, he could not have acted on it.

4. (*a*) A reading of Professor Neale's account of the Babington Plot in his *Queen Elizabeth* makes it quite clear, I think, that he admits the Government's rôle in it.

(*b*) As far as I know, it has been common knowledge to students of the Plot—at least for the last fifty years—that the Government was aware of it from its inception.

5. No general history book—again, as far as I know—points out that Cecil knew of and fostered the Plot; that the 'Monteagle letter' leading to the alleged 'discovery' was an elaborate farce; that the 'confession' of Winter is forged and that of Fawkes, extracted in any case under torture, carefully 'edited'; and that the Government purpose in the Plot was finally to exterminate Catholicism in England.

THE DEATH OF WILLIAM RUFUS

SIR,

There is no need for such an involved explanation of the death of William Rufus as that given by Mr. Hugh Ross Williamson. Certain facts point to a much simpler explanation.

The Norman Conquest began in 1066 and was completed some seven years later. The New Forest was planted at the command of William the Conqueror and homes and farms were cleared out of the area ruthlessly to make way for his pleasure ground. Many unfortunate people were dispossessed of their homes in order that the Conqueror might hunt the stag in a new area.

In 1081 the Conqueror's son, Richard, was killed by a stag in the New Forest. So runs the official version. Rufus' nephew, Richard, was killed in the New Forest in May 1100 whilst hunting, as mentioned by Mr. Williamson, and Rufus himself was also killed there in August 1100. In other words, in less than a generation after the beginning of the Norman Conquest, in an area rendered odious to the English inhabitants by the method of its creation, three members of the hated Norman ruling caste were killed. Instead of an involved theory based on the devil worship of the late Middle Ages, it would seem to me far more probable that the deaths in question took place at the hands of some of the English resistance movement.

Yours, etc.,

L. G. PINE.

London, E.C.4.

Victoria and Albert Museum

THE 'V. & A.' IS A MUSEUM OF FINE AND APPLIED ART of all countries, periods and styles, including oriental art. It is under the Ministry of Education. The collections include: Architectural Details, Arms and Armour, the Art of the Book, Bronzes, Carpets, Clocks, Costumes, Cutlery, Drawings, Embroideries, Enamels, Engravings, Fabrics, Furniture, Glass, Gold and Silversmiths' Work, Ironwork, Ivories, Jewellery, Lace, Lithographs, Manuscripts, Metalwork, Miniatures, Musical Instruments, Oil Paintings, Posters, Pottery and Porcelain, Prints, Sculpture, Stained Glass, Tapestries, Theatre Art, Vestments, Watches, Water-Colours, Woodwork.

The European collections are mostly of Post-Classical art, from Early Christian times to the 19th century.

The Museum also includes the National Art Library (books and photographs on Art and allied subjects); the National Collections of Post-Classical Sculpture, of British Miniatures, and of Water-Colours; and the National Lantern Slide Loan Collection.

The Museum Galleries, for the first time in their history, are now being rearranged in two distinct, but equally important, groups. The *Primary Collections* (specially arranged in newly decorated galleries and mostly on the ground floor) will show the visitor a connected series of galleries in which masterpieces of all the arts are brought together by style, period or nationality, i.e., Early Mediaeval; Gothic; Renaissance; English 1500-1850; Continental, 1570-1825, Islamic; Far East; Indian (in the Indian Section). The *Secondary* or *Study Collections*, are arranged according to the material or class of object.

*

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NEW BOOKS

A HISTORY OF SOVIET RUSSIA:

The Bolshevik Revolution 1917–1923
Volume I. By E. H. Carr. *Macmillan* 25s.
Reviewed by E. Penning-Rowsell

The historian of Soviet Russia is faced by problems unknown to students of less controversial régimes. Until recently it was common practice to dismiss the theories of Marx as outdated, the polemics of Lenin as irrelevant and the writings of Stalin as unimportant. Since, it has been suggested, all Bolshevik theory and practice amounts to 'heads we win, tails you lose', there is no need to delve into their underlying doctrines. However, the impact of world events and the work of scholars, including Catholics and others inimical to Soviet ideology, have induced different views. Many opponents believe that Communist achievements are not in small measure due to its theoretical basis and that the roots of Soviet thought must be understood to be opposed. Moreover, the Russian revolution was the first to be planned in accordance with a theory. And this basis, however developed or modified, has remained.

Professor Carr, in the first volume of his long-planned history of Soviet Russia, takes no sides, but makes no bones about accepting, for the purpose of his study, the validity of Bolshevik theory. Although, as he states, not a Marxist, he agrees intellectually, if not in practice, with the basic premises of revolutionary necessity. Those who expect moral judgments will be disappointed, but instead there is brilliant analysis and dissection of Bolshevik policy from its foundations to the death of Lenin. The presentation in great detail is backed by extensive quotation from official Soviet sources. To some, these will appear the driest of dry bones of history but in fact they are bones full of life today.

The difficulty of writing about Soviet Russia is increased by the general absence of memoirs, autobiographies and minutiae of personal life, which under other régimes amplify and soften the outlines of an epoch and its leading actors. True, there are the accounts of those who from abroad have written to prove how much better they could have filled the rôles, but at least in this volume of the revolutionary period Professor Carr prefers to write an account in which personalities play severely subordinate rôles. Lenin is an exception. The author is clearly fascinated by his personality and intellectual ability to dominate the perpetual controversies which shook the Russian Social-Democratic Party and its Communist successor. Again and again is demonstrated the correctness of his arguments, which initially were more often than not minority views. In the political field Lenin had the gift of a great military commander in being able to see 'the other side of the hill'. Much of his success, the author shows, was due to his power of appraising and anticipating the reactions of opponents as well as of supporters.

At the same time the other revolutionary figures, if minor, are not lifeless. Trotsky is assigned a more considerable rôle than Soviet historians would allow, but in the controversies between him and Lenin, Professor Carr comes down heavily on the side of Lenin, as he does when dealing with the many 'deviations' to Left and Right of Bukharin, Kamenev, Zinoviev and others. At the same time he rejects the common view that Stalin was a comparative nonentity in 1917 and but a minor figure up to Lenin's last illness.

Many will find most interesting the long section dealing with the problems of self-determination and colonialism and the way in which the Bolsheviks settled them in the post-revolutionary period. The ability of Communists to play so prominent a rôle in the nationalist movements of Asia is greatly due to their assimilation of earlier theory and practice, and this part of Professor Carr's exhaustive work will repay close attention by students of colonial affairs.

THE STRANGE CASE OF ROBERT LOUIS STEVENSON

By Malcolm Elwin. *MacDonald.* 12s. 6d.

Stevenson and Wilde continue to attract the attention of the modern biographers more than do any other late nineteenth-century English writers—and neither of them, by the way, was English! The reason for this varying, but as yet unceasing, interest lies not so much in the merits or in the strong flavour of the work of these two men as in the strong flavour of their personalities. Anyone who has been even superficially interested in them feels that he knows what they would have been like to meet, and many who feel this are prepared to read what other people feel on the same subject.

Mr. Malcolm Elwin has been the latest to venture into the as yet not quite completely trampled field of R.L.S. biography. His *The Strange Case of Robert Louis Stevenson* covers for the well-read Stevensonian much familiar ground; but it holds the attention partly by the urgency of the author's own interest in his subject and partly by the publication of a certain amount of new material in the shape of letters to, from and between Stevenson's friends.

It is, however, in his theory of R.L.S.'s personality that one supposes that the author would claim most originality, and it is on this subject that he would most wish to be heard. Mr. Elwin believes that Stevenson was a split personality, and that, in writing *Jekyll and Hyde*, he was expressing his own dichotomy. Something of this point of view has been put before, notably by Chesterton, but no one has been at such pains to elaborate the theory at such length as Mr. Elwin.

Mr. Elwin's chief weakness in putting his case is that he overstates it. Anyone who knows his Stevenson knows that the struggle to gain freedom to become a writer was also a struggle in his own mind between an innate Bohemianism and an equally innate love of, and respect for, his family, his home and his 'beloved and hated' native city. To compare these two halves of Stevenson's affections to the repulsively vicious Hyde and the equally repulsively virtuous Jekyll is absurd. Stevenson may well have been prompted to his tale by the knowledge of the split within himself, but even his dramatic temperament would never have seen the two sides of his personality in anything so strong a light as in his 'shilling shocker' as he called it.

Mr. Elwin also supports, more by implication than by direct statement, the view, so ardently put forward by the 1920 debunkers, that Stevenson's wife brought out the Jekyll in him to an exaggerated extent, and thus damaged his artistic career. This, to put it mildly, is an arguable point. What is not arguable, however, is the fact that Mr. Elwin has taken the usual stock notions of nineteenth-century Edinburgh, and the usual stock notions of Stevenson's parents without bothering to question whether they are correct.

Despite these qualifications, it should be repeated that this is, for all who are interested in R.L.S., a highly readable book —not the least for its new material in the form of letters.

WYNDHAM LEWIS

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ELIZABETH'S IRISH WARS

By Cyril Falls. *Methuen.* 25s.

The strategic importance of Ireland, and the problem it causes to a Britain dependent on supplies carried across the Atlantic was obvious to us all during the last war, and it still influences the attitude of the British Government to the partition of Ireland. But the problem is not new; it has in fact bedevilled the relations between the two countries for centuries. It appeared in the 1914–18 war, during the wars of the French Revolution, and during the Williamite wars. It first arose in an acute form during the reign of Elizabeth. The Queen and her ministers clearly and ruthlessly saw that an unsubdued Ireland was a constant danger to England and an irresistible invitation to any continental enemy. Contemporary observers, both English and foreign, had no doubt that the Irish Wars were England's most important military commitment of the time. And yet, as Professor Falls points out, these wars have been neglected by historians. Of course they were unattractive and unpopular—a series of skirmishes, ambushes and butcheries in bogs and forests. And, again, they ended so successfully for England that later historians forgot that they might have ended differently. Although Professor Falls is writing mainly as a military historian, he gives a masterly account of the background to the wars, of the social and economic basis of Ireland, and of the reasons why the wars had to be fought.

Elizabeth's wars in Ireland involved the collision of two civilisations, of which the older went down. The odds were against the Irish because the English State was competent and well-organised, though at times England's other difficulties, and in particular the war with Spain, gave the Irish a temporary advantage. The victory was finally won by the quality of the English soldier and the skill of men like Sir George Carew and Sir Henry Docwra who enlisted the Irish to fight the Irish.

Professor Falls has given these wars, and the men on both sides, their proper place in military history. But this book is more than 'mere' military history; it is a fine work of historical scholarship, which is of great interest to both Englishmen and Irishmen.

PLEASURES OF LONDON

By M. Willson Disher. *Robert Hale.* 21s.

Reviewed by V. C. Clinton-Baddeley

It is a melancholy fact that the pleasures of London have fallen into decline. Year by year offices, factories and flats are pushing entertainments further and further from their original strongholds. South of the river the old theatres have been pulled down or blown up, and the Strand has lost nearly all its historic gaiety. It seems that the English can never have it both ways: if they want a fine bridge and a roundabout, then they must lose the Lyceum. And those theatres which do remain are no longer set in a land of evening delights. The convivial supper places, whether for rich or less rich, have largely departed, and the monster houses of refreshment will never take their place. 'Even in the teashops there is less pleasure,' remarks Mr. Willson Disher truly, and 'a good deal less playing of dominoes'.

Pleasures of London is a survey of London's entertainments, described, district by district, by one who has had a long and happy experience of high jinks. Thirty chapters describe where the vanished theatres, circuses and restaurants used to be, and recount the history of those buildings and resorts which still remain to us. Read at length, like any other surfeit of pleasure, the book is a little exhausting—for the pleasures of London have been many, and there never was such a chap as Mr. Disher for dancing from subject to subject and for decorating a picture with reminiscences and philosophical observations. Read it in bed, chapter by chapter, and *Pleasures of London* will promote much delight, for it is full of interest and illuminated by many happy phrases. As a book of reference, the book has a second importance. The varied information it contains will be found nowhere else under one cover, and it is admirably illustrated by many not well-known pictures.

THE PSYCHOLOGY OF IMAGINATION

By Jean-Paul Sartre. *Rider*. 15s.

Reviewed by John Cocking

M. Sartre has written two books on imagination. *L'Imagination* (1936) was a critique of existing notions. Descartes, Spinoza, Hume, Leibnitz and the Associationists were tried and rejected. *Enfin Husserl vint* . . . In the last chapter the author adopted Husserl's phenomenology as the basis of a new attack on the problem of the image and promised a second study, which appeared in 1940 as *L'Imaginaire*. This has now been published in English.

M. Sartre has often made it clear that the aim of his own imaginative writing is more didactic than aesthetic, but he recognises, in poetry, another kind of writing which cannot be (in his sense) 'committed', any more than painting and music. His study of imagination leads naturally to a study of creative imagination; art is one of man's ways of transcending the given world and affirming his freedom. But M. Sartre is first a moralist. The present work gives only the last short chapter to 'The Work of Art' and is mainly concerned with the tremendous significance of imagination in the metaphysics of the human situation.

From the phenomenological standpoint, the image is not (as so many 'scientific' psychologists assume) *in* consciousness; it is a kind of consciousness. It is not a vestige of perception, passively suffered, but an *act*, spontaneous and purposeful. Imagination is not a contingent feature of consciousness but belongs to its essence; no imagination, no consciousness. Imagination is 'the whole of consciousness as it realises its freedom.'

This is an exciting piece of thinking, but it has been shabbily treated by the anonymous translator. In a technical translation one can forgive such not-too-disconcerting peccadilloes as 'actual' for *actuel*, 'unaltered' for *inaltéré*, 'explain' for *expliciter*, 'envisions' for *vise*. Most of the misprints are detectable, though Messer would be astonished to find his views attributed to Mesmer. What is unpardonable is the break in the argument, the balderdash,

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the self-contradiction which results from the translator's failure to grasp the thought he is translating; there are half a dozen major blunders of this variety in the first thirty pages.

ANDRÉ GIDE

By D. L. Thomas. *Secker & Warburg.* 15s.

Reviewed by Anthony Curtis

The contradictions inherent in Gide began before he did. His father was a Protestant from the South, his mother a Catholic from Normandy. These warring influences produced what he calls 'un être de dialogue'—one for ever trying, and always just failing, to achieve complete sincerity, one in whom reason succeeds impulse as the generator of action, and for whom future time is infinitely more important than past. It is in this last quality, his sharp focus on the future, his sense of 'becoming' that Gide's outlook contrasts so markedly with Proust's. 'The architect of beauty for the passive and contemplative Proust,' says Mr. Thomas, 'is the memory, the past is the source of real experience; for the eager, dynamic Gide it is the future with its inexhaustible power of surprise, bringing freshness and joy.'

Gide sees the novel as a kind of dialogue between writer and reader. Hence the listeners in *L'Immoraliste* and the journal in *Les Faux Monnayeurs*. And thus he chooses forms where the tension of his own personality—overtly and challengingly presented—becomes the unifying centre of the work. Moreover, his fiction is dialectical internally as well as externally; he fixes from the outset on a clash of moral attitudes rather than the detached representation of character and personal relations.

Just now French literature is dancing to Gide's tune more than to that of anyone else. Without Gide, Sartre and Camus, would, one feels, be writing very differently. This richly packed and engrossing critical study by Mr. Thomas has therefore been opportunely timed. His sub-title, 'The Ethic of the Artist', indicates what for him is the essence of Gide—his conception of creativity; he plots this on that central part of the map of modern thought whose main contours are Nietzsche, Santayana, Bergson and Whitehead. For a critical writer in English Mr. Thomas is uncommonly lively—almost, though one hesitates to say it, too lively. His incessant parentheses leave one at times painfully out of breath. The final effect, though, is of an exhilarating cross-country run over the whole area of Gide's work, with Existentialism just discernible beyond the winning-post.

NUMBER THREE SAINT JAMES'S STREET

A History of Berry's the Wine Merchants. By H. Warner Allen. *Chatto & Windus.* 12s. 6d.

REMINISCENCES OF A VINTNER

By Ian Maxwell Campbell. *Chapman & Hall.* 18s.

Reviewed by E. Penning-Rowsell

The wine trade in England seems to have certain preservative qualities. Most of the leading merchants can boast respectably old pre-phylloxera foundations, and many of them, like the proprietors of No. 3 St. James's Street, go back into previous centuries. The author of *Reminiscences of a Vintner* is an octogenarian wine-shipper who began his calling in Xeres over sixty years ago. In fact, the English wine merchant is a unique figure in the commerce of the world. In the wine-growing countries of Europe, the retail disposal of wine is a matter-of-fact business usually left to grocers; in America wine has a scant corner on a drug-store shelf. If in Britain, too, grocers push well-shaken bottles across their counters, there is also a tradition of specialised wine-selling that ranges back over two centuries. These books, particularly Mr. Warner Allen's, provide some of the background of this tradition. Berry's themselves began as grocers, dispensing rare teas and coffees at the sign of the Coffee Mill. The transition to wine took more than a century after Mr. Pickering, direct ancestor by partnerships and family relations of the Berry family, obtained permission from the ancestors of the present landlord to rebuild No. 3 St. James's Street in 1731. Pickering became *the* fashionable grocer of a fashionable

neighbourhood, and his successors hit upon the happy idea of using the firm's great scales to weigh their customers. The extant Weighing Books record nearly 30,000 entries in little less than 200 years. Prime Ministers, foreign statesmen and the beau-monde have tested their corpulence while buying their tea, coffee or wine. Among those recorded are the ducal sons of George III, Philippe 'Egalité', two years before his Paris execution, Beau Brummel who tried the scales almost forty times, and Louis Napoleon, who later borrowed a corner of the firm's cellars in which to write proclamations to the French people in 1848. In the Tichborne Case, Lord Chief Justice Bovill came down to St. James's Street to see whether the claimant's excessive bulk corresponded with the recorded weights of the Portland family. He found nothing to support his case.

Mr. Warner Allen's book may appear to be more social than wine history, but the account of the last century will interest wine drinkers. For example, interesting details are given of the extraordinary eclipse in the '90s of sherry. This apparently received its death-blow when King Edward VII on his accession, perhaps to raise money, sold 5,000 dozen from the Buckingham cellars of his mother who had never touched sherry. Mr. Berry bought the last nine dozen in the sale at over £2 a bottle and successfully relied on royal associations to sell them at a profit.

Colonel Campbell's book is also not entirely about wine. The author must be one of the few living men who can boast of having bowled out W. G. Grace in first-class cricket. That was at the turn of the century when Grace was in his early fifties. There are stories of many other activities, sporting and military, but it is to the wine sections that many will turn. It is encouraging for a younger generation brought up on Algerian wines and the uneven wartime vintages to have an expert view that there is no need to repine over the great wines of the past. There is, he asserts, as good wine available today as ever there was, although it needs time to reach its best. All the preference that he will allow the classic wines of pre-phylloxera days is that they were perhaps rather longer-lived.

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THE LAST ACTOR-MANAGERS

By Hesketh Pearson. *Methuen.* 18s.

Reviewed by V. C. Clinton-Baddeley

Hesketh Pearson's *The Last Actor-Managers* began in a series of radio talks, and in its extended form you may still run through it in an evening. It is a very readable book, and as pleasant as a friendly conversation —but, like a conversation, it is easily forgotten. The reader does not take away with him an impression of these last actor-managers, equal, say, to the self-portrait given by one of the first of them, old Tate Wilkinson, in his incomparable ungrammatical English. Mr. Pearson's much better written book is less a contribution to theatrical history than to the pleasures of the fireside. It fills an evening more successfully than it fills a place on the bookshelf.

The Last Actor-Managers contains ten portrait sketches, of Forbes-Robertson, Tree, Waller, Martin Harvey, Benson, Aske, H. R. Irving, Lawrence Irving, Alexander, and Granville Barker. One of the book's most agreeable features is the complete absence of axes to grind or reputations to polish. The author is drawing portraits, not delivering medals. He praises but never worships, criticises but never attacks, is candid but never malicious. The whole thing is written with an air of authority and one does not feel inclined to question a word of it—except one thing. *Did* W. S. Gilbert call Tree's Hamlet 'funny without being vulgar'? Hitchens wrote it in *The Green Carnation*, and surely he would not have borrowed so excellent a witticism?

The most revealing and the best written of these studies is the portrait of George Alexander. (How ghastly were his sufferings at the hands of Mrs. Campbell!) The most interesting is the portrait of Benson, whose importance as an influence in the theatre Mr. Pearson justly recognises, without yielding him any laurels as an actor.

The Last Actor-Managers is illustrated with over a hundred photographs of actor-managers in actor-managerial attitudes and situations—which in itself makes excellent entertainment.

HAROLD'S LEAP

Poems and Drawings by Stevie Smith. *Chapman & Hall.* 10s. 6d.

Alas for the great *diseuses*, for there are poems here which should be repeated in the tender, sinister and smoky atmosphere of a *boîte de nuit:*

'My heart is fallen in despair'
Said Easter Ross to Jolie Bear.
Jolie answered never a word
But passed her plate as if she had not heard.

Mrs. Ross is took to her bed
And kept her eye fixed on the bed-rail peg
'When I am dead roll me under the barrow,'
And who but pretty Jolie shall carry the harrow.

Jolie Bear is gone away
Easter Ross's heart is broke,
Everything went out of her
When Jolie never spoke.

Note the true pathos of this, for these poems recognise the uncomfortable fact that noble human beings at the height of their tragedy are usually grotesque.

Then he put his gun to his head and shot
Crying absurdly, I am not.

Note also the electrifying skill of the technique, for only the truly sophisticated can accord this simplicity (and how embarrassing it is when it misfires, as it did so often in those ballads of Auden's). Miss Smith does not always hit it off; no one could, but her originality and irony are very unlike anyone else's, and every now and then came images and lines as unexpected as a pale face pressed against the window-pane at night and suddenly looking in at us.

JOB

By H. van Wagenwoorde. *Fortune Press.* 6s.

Mr. van Wagenwoorde's poems have, as an introduction, an interesting essay on existentialism and French poetry as it strikes the Dutch. Much to be respected, however, is the earnest desire to overcome chaos, and to find a new poetic language,

though unfortunately no trace of this can be discovered in the poems themselves.

A VAGRANT AND OTHER POEMS

By David Gascoyne. *Lehmann.* 7s. 6d.

One must, to begin with, repress the feeling that Gascoyne had much more in him in the old Surrealist days, and that there is something wearying about the simplicities of his position today.

Really religious people are rarely
  looked upon as such
By those to whom religion is secretly
  something unreal;
And those the world regards as
  extremely religious people
Are generally people to whom the
  living God will seem at first an
  appalling scandal . . .

etc., etc., an unorthodoxy so orthodox that it is 'standard' for Hollywood films about shabby priests, novels by Somerset Maugham and 'verse drama' on the B.B.C. Recognising, however, that Mr. Gascoyne has every right to arrive where he has, you cannot deny him his gifts as a pure poet. He is able to describe those moments of emotion (which are perhaps not a cheat after all), moments that come when you step into an empty room or look from the darkened garden back to the house and see the firelight shining through the windows:

Mysterious and unrecapturable
  moment, when I stood
There staring back at the dark white
  nocturnal house,
And saw gleam through the lattices a
  light more pure than gold
Made sanguine with crushed roses,
  from the firelight that all night
Stayed flickering about the sacred
  hearth.

He has sincerity, plainness, a natural spring of emotion, less of a gift with words and metres than some of his contemporaries, but an obstinate determination to write in his own style. And having started out as a poet, he is still a poet.

And there can be for us no place quite
  alien and unknown
No situation wholly hostile, if
  somewhere there burn
The faithful fire of vision still awaiting
  our return.

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By Jocelyn Brooke. *The Bodley Head.* 9s. 6d.

SCAMP

By Roland Camberton.

John Lehmann. 9s. 6d.

Reviewed by Stevie Smith

This book is prefaced with a short quotation from Beowulf, but it is left in the original Anglo-Saxon so those who do not know Anglo-Saxon cannot read it. Reynard Langrish, the hero, is a young man who is finding life rather dull working in a bank; war was more exciting. He lives with his old mother . . . 'calmly, she continued to make preparations for the evening meal: laying out the cold meat, the tea-things . . .' in a small house, one has the idea near Folkestone, though the place names are fictitious. Mrs. Langrish is like the weeping woman of stone; how important she is in this book does not seem always quite intended. Reynard, with whom in a sense the author identifies himself, has a uneasy hate-love relationship with this deaf old lady of doom. Perhaps he does not see that the tears flow for a worthless son, a boy gone to the bad? But he thinks he has not gone to the bad. This young man falls in with a mysterious stranger, a soldier-type, full of o.l.q. a 'good show', 'keep fit', 'no nonsense' young officer who draws him into a strange *Brüderschaft* (the whole book is rather German in feeling). This *Brüderschaft* is the ghost army of an inflamed night-dream, an army that rejoices in the sordid lives of its private soldiers, in the routine of becoming 'browned off', in the quick response to violence and the unspecified but pervasive sense of a firm purpose. They are all dream phantoms fighting a phantom war against an unknown 'enemy' that is probably made up of people who adhere to all that nonsense about not being devoted to becoming dragooned. Or maybe it is just Moscow again. The book is written devilishly excitingly; it treads always on that fatal nerve that responds so devilishly to cruelty and especially to cruel beatings. Now this fatal nerve has been the prop of many books that have been good, bad, and indifferent, and one supposes these private night-dreams may have their place, but one prefers the matter to be recognised as Christopher Isherwood recognises it in *Mr. Norris Changes Trains*—for what it is. But though Mr. Brooke hugs his dear nerve, it is not to say that he is as bad as poor Miss Dell because he is a good writer. When, like True Thomas, he comes back from a brief stay in his evil fairyland of the never-never army, whole years have passed away in our world of substance. He fights his way through the brambles and the dust of his old home and finds his mother dead and decayed lying alone under the aged sheets. He turns away with feelings of patronising pity and an evil gladness and says good-bye to the light of our world and goes back to the madness of his dream, to the triangle at which he will purge his desertion, for he has run away on active service in the dream war-time, and after the beating they will give him, he will be a new man. One doubts it.

It is extraordinarily interesting to come from this novel to the book, *The Goose Cathedral*, for they run so much on the same lines though here the dream world lies still in dreams. There is the same able writing in *The Goose Cathedral* and there are also the autobiographical details . . . the old-ladyish old gentleman friend, the careful old ladyish, and young ladyish, gentleman's tastes, the coarse army companions (he joins up again as a private) the 'right' tastes again in reading and the radio—*New Statesman*, Third Programme, the line picked from Phèdre without thought of the context: now one feels there should be a moratorium on the quoting of this particular line, 'C'est Venus toute entière à sa proie attachée . . .' and so on. But it is amusing to read about and recognise so many well-trod paths, and among several good character studies the tough young soldier parasite, dear friend of the old gentleman, is especially good. The author makes an amusing tale of this young man's inconspicuous start and glorious Mammon-rewarded finish.

The interesting question about these two books, that go so well together, and about his earlier novel, *The Scapegoat*, too, remains: Just how much does Mr. Brooke know what he is writing about? Is there not perhaps—that most unlooked-for thing in a writer so sensitive in many ways as he is—a failure in self-consciousness?

Mr. Camberton's first novel shows a very observing eye and a gift for controlling the people he puts in his novel and keeping the whole thing well balanced and affectionate. He is very fond of his shabby lot, too fond perhaps because he sometimes gives happy endings to situations that have in them nothing but the seeds of eternal gloom. His hero is a young man called Ivan Ginsberg who should have married the young girl who jumped over the Welsh cliff when their baby was going to be born. There is something touching about this Ivan. He is now living the unsuccessful literary life of grand old London, trying to produce a magazine called *Scamp*. But when at the end of the book he marries the young Irish girl who has sent him a story and then come herself with a suitcase to sit on his doorstep, this is one of the times when it gets difficult to believe. Perhaps it is London that is the real hero of this book, the grand old, smelly old, rat-invested, tea-swilling, cabbage stinking, rent-unpaid London of Soho, Charlotte Street, and those ripe areas around King's Cross and the Euston Road. Mr. Ginsberg's friends are creatures of the night; they come out at night from the rooming houses where the baths have turned black and are filled with unwashed pots, so that when the people want to wash themselves they have to push the pots on one side and scrape the scum off the water; they sit all night in cafés and milk bars and go out with master-beggars and compositors and hack journalists; sometimes in these marsh-light haunts will be seen the figure of a 'serious writer'; ah! what a moment that is for the boy who wishes to establish himself. Mr. Camberton's rendering of foreigner's English is also good. 'Mr. Rrrupertson—do you by any chunz gnaw him? . . . took me to lunch at Clerrridges . . . verrry nize lunch . . . verry nize chet, but no chop.' This book is a document in 'no chop' (no job) boys, in pretty twenty-year-old girls, destined to foul sofas and fouler

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surgery (with what fury he writes of these hideous abortions). There is also the Mrs. Chabbers he gives Russian lessons to, so happily married off in the end (but again one wonders . . .) and there is the pitiable Bert Flogcropper, Fleet Street hack, turned Jew-hater by his tight collars and the whisky he is always drinking; because how else could he cope with those extra 'features' for Sunday shockers that must be written so that his snob suburban family can cut a figure. It is a rich, generous talent, but Mr. Camberton must not overrun himself or be too affectionate.

SHORTER NOTICES

Boswell's London Journal 1762–1763
Heinemann. 21s.
Edited by Professor Frederick Pottle

American scholars, having acquired vast and indigestible quantities of papers from Scottish country-houses, the deification of Boswell is going full-steam ahead. The fact is, however, that the *London Journal* has become a best seller not because it is well-written (it could not compare with Kilvert, or, in another vein, with Harriet Wilson) —not because, on this occasion, Boswell was laying bare his heart to any great extent (for he was writing in instalments for his friend Johnston of Grange)—certainly not because he was, as Professor Pottle claims, 'a great imaginative artist—the peer in imagination of Scott and Dickens' —but because

(1) he had the good fortune to become a friend of Dr. Johnson. This truth is becoming increasingly unpalatable and is yielding to what Professor Pottle calls 'a new and sympathetic attitude towards Boswell, largely initiated by the work of Professor Chauncey B. Tinker of Yale'.

(2) the *Journal* contains long passages describing Boswell's intrigues and sexual misfortunes. Meanwhile the great machine rolls on and, over a period of years, a vast collection of papers will appear processed by the finest scholarship and a reverence greater than that which Boswell once showed to Johnson himself.

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Edited by Philip Henderson
Longmans Green & Co. 25s.

William Morris wrote vast quantities of letters, but was not much of a letter-writer; it was among the arts he did not cultivate. This fine selection offers no clue to the minor mysteries in which we are, but should not be, interested—why would he have no looking-glasses in the house; was Rossetti in love with Janey? (Sir Sidney Cockerell, one of the last who can speak with good authority, says he never saw any hint of this whatever) but it makes a good companion to the Mackail *Life*, which still remains the best of the biographies.

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